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ABSTRACT

This guide is designed to help adult students survive and succeed in their college studies. Its 15 chapters contain practical advice on the following topics: obtaining the help available to adult students, confronting and overcoming fears and concerns, enrolling in a program and financing its costs, getting acquainted with the campus during orientation, gaining the support and encouragement of family and friends, balancing going to college with working, succeeding in college, managing available time and studying efficiently, learning the best way to study, getting high grades on tests, writing excellent papers, learning about one's own writing style, influencing instructors and salvaging poor grades; thriving under pressure, and learning in the school of life and developing a survivor's personality. An appendix on career choice and change, a list of 35 sources and suggested readings, a sample weekly schedule grid, and an index are also included. (MN)

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# The Adult Student's Guide to Survival & Success

SECOND EDITION

## Time for College

AL SIEBERT & BERNADINE GILPIN

CE 064 062



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# TIME FOR COLLEGE

also by Al Siebert:

*Learning Psychology*, (co-author: Timothy L. Walter)
*Student Success: How to Succeed in College and Still Have Time for Your Friends* (co-author: Timothy L. Walter)

also by Bernadine Gilpin:

*Career Cycles* Series
*1: Job Loss/Change*
*2: Right Job For You*
*3: Get Job Information*
*4: Résumés, Application*
*5: Interviews*
*Teaching College Success to Older Students*, instructor's manual to accompany *Time For College*

The Adult Student's Guide
to Survival and Success!

# TIME FOR COLLEGE

AL SIEBERT & BERNADINE GILPIN

SECOND EDITION

Contributing editor:
Samuel Kimball, University of North Florida
Foreword and comments by Mary Karr
Illustrations by Teresa Rosen

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To all students
with the courage and commitment
to pursue their dreams

# FOREWORD

I did it! I graduated from college with honors and I've now completed a graduate degree. ME! With a husband, four children, three dogs, a cat, and a 44-mile commute each day.

Do you feel nervous? Wonder if you will be able to study and pass tests? Concerned about the effect that your going to college will have on your family or friends? Worried that your car may break down or have a flat tire one morning? Feel like you won't fit in? If so, then you know how all the rest of us felt when we first started!

*Time For College* will help you deal with all your concerns and more. It has the kind of practical information that usually comes only through experience. It shows how to develop effective study habits and good test-taking skills. It has lots of information about how to get through the institutional maze, information that can help you avoid the costly time and money mistakes that can frustrate anyone.

Mainly I would say that if you believe in yourself, and take things one day at a time, you can get the education you've dreamed about. You have faced up to tough challenges before. You can survive all the late nights studying, taking tests, and writing papers. With good effort you can succeed in college. If I did it, I believe you can too!

Mary Karr

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*Chapter 1*

# Going to College: Lots of Help Is Available

*Do you know that at many colleges the average age is about 30 and over half the students work while going to school?*

*Do you know that college instructors like students to form study teams to help each other pass courses?*

*Do you know that colleges and universities provide many free services to help you succeed?*

## A Dream Coming True

Going to college can be exciting and scary. The exciting part is that it is a dream come true. College is the pathway to knowledge, to a new career, to a better future. Going to college is like an adventure into a new world, a journey to a different life.

Like any adventure, however, it has its scary challenges....

## Some Normal Fears and Concerns

Do you feel fearful about going to college? Concerned that your brain is rusty and that you won't be able to keep up with other students? Are you afraid that you can't afford college and yet don't see how you could work and go to college and raise your family? Feel guilty about depriving others while you do something that feels selfish?

If so, welcome to the club! *You are normal.* Most adult college students feel the same fears and concerns when they start. Yet they are succeeding in college and having the time of their lives!

## How *Time For College* Will Help You

Every chapter in the book contains valuable information about how to succeed in college after you have been away from school for awhile. It will show you how to succeed even if you have a family, work, and have other important responsibilities.

**The first chapters** cover how to get started. **Chapter 2** shows how to *confront and eliminate many fears and concerns* reported by adult students.

**Chapter 3** explains *how to make enrollment easy.* Most students need some form of financial assistance, so this chapter includes information on *how to finance your education.*

Part of being successful in new situations is to locate the resources available to you. **Chapter 4** provides information about how to locate the *many sources of help available* at your college.

Most adult college students have important relationships and commitments. In **Chapter 5** you will find many practical ways to gain *cooperation, support, and encouragement from others.*

**Chapter 6** shows *how to combine working with taking college courses*. Most adult students work. A surprising number of employers offer special work schedules and reimbursement for courses completed. This chapter also has suggestions on what to do if you need a "bread and butter" job.

**The middle chapters** cover how to pass your courses with high grades. **Chapter 7** describes *how to succeed in college* and shows how to *increase your self-confidence*.

All of your responsibilities require *effective time management*. **Chapter 8** shows you how to make good use of the limited time that you have available.

**Chapter 9** provides practical information about how to study using *the best, most widely used, effective study method*. Here you will learn how to reach a study goal, stop studying, and reward yourself. Self-motivated people have to learn how to be self-stoppers!

Nervous about taking tests? **Chapter 10** shows you *how to prepare for tests* so that you feel confident, less nervous, and score higher than you suspected you could.

Term papers are always a challenge. In **Chapter 11** you will find an excellent way to *write papers that get high grades*.

**The last chapters** provide information and guidelines about how to cope with challenges of college and life in general. **Chapter 12** shows how your *learning style* may create conflicts between you and your instructors. In **Chapter 13** you will find guidelines on how to resolve conflicts and how to *influence your instructors* when you need to salvage a bad grade.

Going to college has its stresses and strains. **Chapter 14** contains a simple but effective way to reduce stress and actually *thrive under pressure*.

In many ways life itself is the real school. **Chapter 15** shows how to gain strength from life's adversities and that the way to develop a talent for serendipity is with self-managed *learning in the school of life*.

At the end of each chapter you will find an **Action Review**. It is a checklist for reviewing how well you are putting into action what the chapter covered.

Many students come to college searching for new or better careers. Other students already know what they want and are in a career development program. We decided to place *career information* in an **Appendix**. It will be helpful if you are searching for a new career.

## Dreams and Clocks

We want to introduce you to a friendly little character, an old-fashioned, three-legged alarm clock. We added it because you need clocks when your dream for your future includes taking college courses.

Clocks and dreams do not generally go well together but when you go to college you get up, eat, leave for school, arrive for class, study, and return home by the clock. You live by the clock from morning until night. Clocks help you reach your dream of a college education and a better life. We want to emphasize that clocks are helpers, not oppressors. We hope our clock makes your journey more interesting.

## Create a "Study Buddy" Group

As Barbara Sher says in *Teamworks!* "Everybody who ever succeeded and stayed human in the process had a lot of help..."and "People have more courage for each other than for themselves."

Many colleges now provide seminars or workshops for new students. If you can arrange to take one of these seminars your chances of succeeding in college will increase. Many adult students can't fit such classes into their schedules, however, so we

want to encourage you to join with several other students in creating your personal support group. You'll be less lonely, develop good friendships, and help each other through tough moments. Guidelines for getting started are at the end of this chapter.

## You are Special as a Student

Have you noticed that when you tell people about going to college they treat you differently? Mary Karr, who wrote the Foreword for us, started college shortly after her youngest daughter entered high school. Mary noticed an immediate change in how people treated her. She says:

> Before I started college, when my husband and I went to a party or social gathering, people would ask what I did. When I told them I was a housewife raising four children they'd say, "Oh," and start talking to someone else. On a scale from 1 to 100, I felt like I rated about a 3. After I enrolled, when people found out I was a college student, they'd say, "Oh!" I got treated like I had something important to say. My rating soared to the high nineties. The difference was fantastic!

One student reported that he needed to change his working hours by half an hour to make a night class. He hesitated about approaching his supervisor but finally spoke up. He asked for what he needed and explained why. From that day on his supervisor took a more personal interest in him and asked frequently about how school was going. Being a student can have some unexpected dividends!

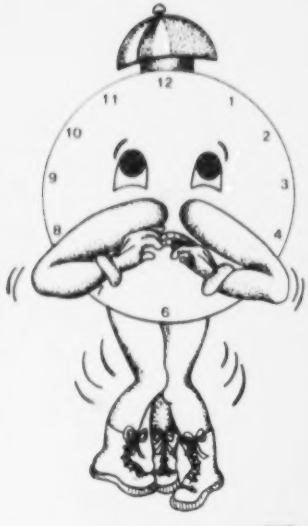
## The World Wants You to Succeed

Going to college is an exciting challenge. It will take hard work and some sacrifices but the benefits are worth the effort. The main point to understand is that *you are not alone*. There are many people and many resources available to you. The world wants you to succeed in your effort to better yourself!

## How to Get a Support Group Started: Teaming Up With "Study Buddies"

Here are some guidelines for starting a College Success Group:

- Get together with a few other beginning students. Urge any new students that seem "lost" to come along.
- Meet in a place where you can sit comfortably and talk with each other, perhaps in the college cafeteria.
- Introduce yourselves. Keep repeating and checking that you have each others' names right as you talk and listen.
- Take turns talking about your feelings, impressions, and experiences starting college.
- Find out why you each decided to go to college. Ask about difficulties that have to be handled. Talk about your dreams and plans for the future.
- Ask about the courses you are each taking. Find out what program each person has selected or is considering.
- Make certain each person feels heard. By the time you finish, make certain each of you feels "A few of my classmates know about me and understand what I am feeling and experiencing right now."
- Discuss the benefits from having a small support group. Talk about why it will be useful to get together to study for tests, read each other's papers, problem solve difficulties, encourage each other, and applaud your successes.
- Plan to meet again soon to discuss what you are learning in this book about how to succeed in college. Read the chapters, for example, on ways to increase self-confidence and how to gain support from family and friends.
- Exchange telephone numbers. During the first weeks it will be useful to telephone each other often and meet frequently.
- Congratulate each other for having the courage to take this exciting, important step in life.



*Chapter 2*

# Fears and Concerns: How to Confront and Overcome Them

*Have you wondered if some of your fears about going to college are unrealistic?*

*Do you know that instructors enjoy teaching adult students and adult students often get high grades?*

*Do you know financial aid is available to older and part-time students?*

*Do you know that colleges, universities, and company training programs go out of their way to help adult students enroll and succeed?*

*So, I finally dragged myself over to the community college and took two courses. And, I was scared to death. I had been at war, in police riots, and a firefighter and that was all right. But, now I'm going to this college and I'm scared to death. I literally had stomach cramps—got physically sick. I really don't know why I was scared. I had no idea...no reason...it had nothing to do with anything...there was no consequence to pay...I could have gone over there, flunked out, and nothing would have happened. I would still have been a lieutenant in the fire department. Nothing would have changed. As it turned out, I left there with a 4.0 after taking four courses. But, when I first went through the door, I was dying.* Bob DePrato

## Facing Your Fears Takes Courage

In this book we will show you how thousands of people just like you found the courage to overcome their fears and succeed in college. We will show you how to develop the skills you need to increase your confidence. We will show you how to locate and use resources you never knew existed.

You may doubt your ability to succeed in college if you have not studied or taken tests for a long time, if you have to work, or have other responsiblities. It is possible, however, to be a successful college student and still handle other commitments.

You have overcome fears in the past by facing up to them and seeking information. You can do the same now.

## Common Fears and Concerns of Adult Students

Take a look at the following list of fears and concerns. If you have felt or thought any of them, you are typical of most adult students starting college. As you read the list, ask yourself, "Does this fear or concern make me worry about not succeeding in school?" "Is my fear realistic?"

*I haven't studied in years. I'm out of practice. My brain feels rusty.*

Reality: There is no evidence that older students can't learn and remember as well as younger students. This book will show you how to take notes, remember information from

lectures and texts, and pass tests as well as any younger student.

*I'm not sure I can read, write, or do math well enough to take college courses.*

Reality: The college is happy to give you a free assessment of your skill levels to advise you what courses are best suited for you. If you need brush-up courses, they are available.

*I was always nervous taking tests. I'll be too upset to do well.*

Reality: This book is designed to show you how to reduce your anxieties about taking tests. Also, the college counseling and study skill centers provide help for students who need to learn techniques of test taking. Ask around. Expert help is available.

*I won't be able to compete. Only a few smart students receive high grades.*

Reality: In the past most college courses were competitive. Instructors usually graded "on the curve." They gave high marks to the few students who scored better than others in the class. Now, however, colleges are centers for learning. Most instructors grade students on how much learning they accomplish during a course. This means that you and other students in a course can work together to master the material and all get excellent grades.

> Don't be embarrassed if you can't do everything quickly.
> Don't try to compete with the young—compete with yourself.
> Eva Corazon Fernando-Lumba, age 78
> (Chosen by her college classmates
> to be the class speaker at commencement.)

*They won't let me enroll because I don't have a high-school diploma.*

Reality: Most community colleges will let you enroll for some courses *no questions asked!* You don't need a diploma. To qualify to enter a four-year college or degree program, you

can take tests called *equivalency tests* to earn a certificate that is the same as a high-school diploma. If you want to learn, there are many ways to do it without a diploma.

*My past history in school is not good. I'm afraid they won't let me in.*

Reality: Most community colleges and career training schools have an open-door policy. They care only about what you can do now. You may be happy to know that after accumulating 30 or more hours credit at a community college, most four-year colleges and universities will let you transfer in.

*When my daughter applied to different colleges, they all asked for her SAT or ACT scores. There's no way I could do well enough on the college entrance exams to qualify.*

Reality: The Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and American College Test (ACT) are given to high-school seniors as a way to compare the seniors with each other in basic scholastic skills. Adult students do not usually have to submit these test scores. The academic assessment offered free by colleges takes the place of these nationally conducted tests.

*I won't fit in. I will be an outsider in a world much different from my own.*

Reality: You have as much right to be in school as anyone else. In fact, your tax dollars may have helped build the place. The students, faculty, and administrative members of any college will be far more friendly and helpful than you ever imagined. Many younger students enjoy having older friends from whom they can learn and exchange views and experiences. Making friends like this can be some of the most enriching of your educational experiences.

*Instructors won't like having older students in their classes.*

Reality: You may be close in age to many instructors and have a lot in common with them. Most instructors enjoy and welcome adult students. These instructors welcome the life experience older students offer to a class. They often find communication is easier with you. Returning students are frequently more motivated to learn and pay closer attention to the

instructor. Studies show older students tend to get better grades than younger students.

I was so nervous the first day of classes that I arrived at school 45 minutes ahead of the 9:00 class time. It was OK though, because I needed the time to keep running into the rest room—bladders seem so insistent sometimes. As I walked into the room for my first class I realized that my legs were shaking so hard I could barely walk. Fortunately, the front seat nearest the door was available so I quickly sat down. I tried to remain calm, but I knew I was trembling—my hands just wouldn't stop. After a *very* long time, the teacher came in and was ready to start the class. The first thing I noticed was how young she was and I thought to myself that school was going to be harder than I had imagined because how could this very young woman (she looked like a student herself) ever understand someone my age. Then I noticed that her legs were shaking! *She was nervous! Wonderful!* My day changed and was grand from then on. Oh yes,—I also found out that she was a graduate teaching assistant and that she was very sympathetic to all students. —MK

*I can't afford college.*

Reality: Most students qualify for some sort of financial aid. This may be in the form of scholarships, loans, grants, or employer reimbursements. And did you know that programs now exist where you can earn college credit for working? We will cover this in more detail in Chapter 3. College administrators and counselors are aware of the financial dilemmas facing returning students and will assist you in obtaining financial help. (See Sources and Suggested Readings on page 153).

*I'm retired, I'd like to attend a few classes but I can't afford to pay tuition.*

Reality: Many state-supported schools allow senior citizens to sit in on classes at little or no charge, if space is available. You won't get credit for the course, but you can *audit* or attend

classes at minimal cost. Look in the Sources section at the back of this book for where to write for information about 1500 colleges and universities that offer free or reduced tuition to older students.

*I have young children to raise, and can't afford the cost of child care. How can I attend class while I have children to care for?*

Reality: Colleges are accommodating the needs of returning students. There are child care referral services at many colleges and women's resource centers. Many campuses offer low-cost child-care services for students. Colleges are doing much to assist people who have children. With young children it is very important to select healthful, reliable child care arrangements. Many student parents trade babysitting with other students, friends, family, or neighbors. Most colleges offer classes at night and on weekends. To work out a cooperative schedule one student takes day classes, the other night time or weekend classes. Some student parents vary days of the week with one taking classes on Monday, Wednesday, Friday, the other on Tuesdays and Thursdays. You can also inquire about courses available on video tapes at a learning center where you go through the material at your own speed, at a time that is convenient to you.

*I don't think I can physically attend classes at the college campus.*

Do you know that some college courses can be taken at home by watching broadcasts on public television? Do you know that the college of your choice probably has correspondence or home study courses available? Inquire. You may be in for a pleasant surprise.

*It will take me years to earn a degree, since I cannot attend full time. How can I possibly take that long to finish a degree program?*

Reality: A long journey starts with the first step. Once you become adjusted to being a student and gain confidence, you will probably be able to take more courses each term. In some cases, your life experiences and skills can be counted as credit toward your degree. In the next chapter you will see there are

three ways to obtain college credit for what you already know, without taking courses. Or you might consider a shorter program. Many colleges offer two-year programs for people training for specific careers such as an associate degree in nursing. Regardless of the program you take, most students say their college careers go much faster than they thought possible.

*My friends and family will suffer. I will have to spend so much time with schoolwork that others will feel rejected. What if my partner and/or friends feel threatened by my attempt to improve myself?*

Reality: Your family and friends are quite capable of supporting you in your new role as a student. It's up to you to explain to them why you need to return to school. Show how your success will benefit all of you. Give others a chance and they will probably support you. Chapter 5 has a number of practical suggestions.

*I have a heavy load at work and it's not getting any lighter. I'd never have time to take courses. I would have too many pressures.*

Reality: Saying that you'd never have time is realistic only if you're unwilling to give up an evening a week to take a course. Employers are often willing to adjust workloads for employees in college, see Chapter 6. The time management tips in Chapter 8 will help. For guidelines on dealing with stress and pressure, read Chapter 14. The solution is to decide what you want in life and go for it.

*If I become a student, I'll never have time for my family, friends, or outside interests. I can't take courses, study, and still have time for anything else.*

Reality: It is true that you won't be able to do everything you did before and also be a college student. You will have to make some changes. But millions of people have gone to college while working and maintaining active personal lives. You are no different. If you follow the guidelines for succeeding in college, you'll do just fine and still have time for other important things.

*I won't know anyone and I'm afraid to start out on my own.*
Finding a "study buddy" will help you overcome those feelings quickly. It will not be long before you have supportive friends in each class, friendly fellow students who will help you feel you really belong and can succeed.

## Where There's a Will...

As you can see, there are ways to handle most of your concerns about being a college student. Many fears disappear when you confront them. As other fears or concerns develop, here are the steps to follow:

1. Clarify the worry. Be very specific about exactly what it is. Write it down or try to explain it to someone who is a good listener.
2. Ask yourself, "Is my worry based on rumors, or opinions, or is it a result of known facts?"
3. To deal with potential problems and difficulties that might occur, ask people who have been through it about their experiences. Find out if your fears are real.
4. With serious problems, seek the advice of experts. Develop a realistic plan of action for improving or solving the problem. Remember: *Don't be afraid to ask questions!*

## Colleges, Universities, and Company Training Programs Want You

In the last few years a change has taken place in higher education. Colleges and company training programs are trying to attract and keep older students. Colleges arrange financial aid, employment, transportation (car pools and buses), housing, child care, personal counseling, medical coverage, and classes on how to study efficiently and pass courses. They provide counselors and advisors, recreational activities, and much more. They want to attract and retain students. Likewise, companies will often pay trainees to go through a training program, provide fringe benefits, and guarantee jobs to graduates.

Now is the best time in history to obtain a college education. Colleges, universities, and various organizations have excellent training facilities, expensive training equipment, and dedicated teachers. Students of any age who want an education, advanced skills, or new careers can find support, resources, and encouragement.

## Action Review

Using the following numbers, indicate how strong or weak your fear is about the following.

Strong—5 Moderately strong—4 Medium—3 Mild—2 Weak—1

1. __ I can't compete with younger students.
2. __ I won't be able to learn, my brain is rusty.
3. __ I can't do well in math.
4. __ I won't be able to study well.
5. __ Instructors dislike older students.
6. __ I won't fit in.
7. __ I won't have time for my family or other interests.
8. __ I don't have a high school diploma.
9. __ I can't afford college.
10. __ I can't work and study and raise a family.
11. __ Going part time will take me too long.
12. __ My family will suffer.

## Study Buddy Activity

Talk with each other about your fears and concerns. Then discuss how you can overcome or eliminate the fears and barriers. Keep in mind, too, that some problems can't be eliminated but it helps to talk about them with people who understand.

*Chapter 3*

# Enrolling and Financing Made Easier

*Do you know how to enroll in college? What information to take with you?*

*Do you understand the difference between credit and noncredit courses?*

*Have you heard that you can turn some of your life experiences into college credit?*

*Do you know where to inquire about financial aid?*

*Do you know you can probably get financial aid if you need it?*

## Getting Enrolled

If you want to get a college degree from a four-year college or university, you must apply for admission and meet certain admission requirements before you can enroll. The friendly folks in the admissions office will explain what to do. Advisors and counselors help you get started.

Most community and technical colleges have an open door policy. You do not have to meet admissions requirements. No matter what your background, they will let you take a number of classes *no questions asked*. It is possible to just show up, select the courses you want to take, fill out the registration forms, and pay tuition fees.

If you want to enroll in a specific vocational, technical, or degree program, however, we recommend that you speak to an advisor. It may be necessary to go through an assessment of your reading, writing, and math skills. If you need basic skill classes, the advisors and career counselors will help you arrange to take them, often at no cost.

Community college and technical college classes can lead to a two-year associate degree but the courses you take may or may not transfer to a university for a four-year degree. If you don't know what you want, check with the counseling or advising office. It is a free service and they will help you.

### Credit, Noncredit, and Transfer Courses

The first thing to do is get a copy of the college catalog. Take your time looking through it. Learn how to tell the difference between a credit course, a non-credit course, and a transfer course. A *non-credit* course will not count toward a college degree. A *credit* course leads to a degree or certificate. You cannot earn a college degree by taking non-credit courses. A *transfer* course is a credit course that will be accepted by most four-year colleges if you want to transfer and work toward a four year degree.

You'll need to know what's ahead of you and what courses you will have to take. Your catalog describes all the courses available and tells you which ones you will be required to take if you want a degree or certificate. Read the fine print carefully.

☆ NOTE: *The school catalog is a kind of contract.* The school agrees to award you a degree if you do all the required work. Keep a copy for future reference.

If a course sounds interesting but is within a program for people majoring in that area, you might have to take a prerequisite course before taking the one you wish. A *prerequisite* course is one that students must take and complete before they can get into a more advanced course. Some courses are so popular there are many classes during the day with many instructors. If you have a choice, find out which instructors students recommend and why they recommend them. Keep in mind that an easy teacher may not be the best for your learning.

Once you know the courses you want, look at a schedule of classes. This will tell you the time, location, and instructor for each course. If you do not find what you want, call the department and ask the secretary when your course will be offered next and by whom. Department secretaries are a gold mine of information. Not every course is offered every term or semester.

**Program Choices**

You will need to decide how many courses and how many credit hours you want to try. A full-time student usually takes four or five courses totalling from 12 to 17 credit hours. The college will have a policy limiting the number of hours a student can take.

If you take two or three courses you will be a half-time student, depending on the total of the credit hours.

To help clarify the program choices facing you, here is a short summary of the vocational and academic programs available at most community colleges:

*Associate Degrees*—Require about two years taking a full load.

- General Studies—a combination of vocational courses, transfer courses, and basic skill building courses.
- Vocational—examples: nursing, diesel mechanics, dental assistant, computer science, television.
- Arts/Humanities—courses in writing, journalism, music,

speech communications, theater arts (courses that transfer into four year degree programs at degree granting colleges or universities).

- Science—examples: biology, botany, chemistry, geology, math, computer science (transfer courses).
- Social Science—examples: psychology, sociology, political science, history, geography, economics, women's studies.

Transfer courses taken at a community college or enrollment at a four year college can lead to the following academic degress:

*Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)*—Earned in a four year program emphasizing humanities and arts courses plus a foreign language at an accredited college or university.

*Bachelor of Science (B.S.)*—Earned in a four year program emphasizing science courses plus advanced level mathematics at an accredited college or university.

*Master of Arts (M.A.) or Master of Science (M.S.)*—Earned after the B.A. or B.S., taking approximately two years of courses in arts or science and writing a thesis.

*Doctorates: Philosophy (Ph.D.), Education (Ed.D.)*—Usually earned after the master's degree with advanced, graduate level seminar work and a doctoral thesis based on original research.

**Registration Tips**

If the school allows, register by mail or phone. This will save you much time. If you must be present at registration, plan to spend a lot of time standing in lines. Be prepared by having all the forms filled out in advance, and a list of alternate courses.

Be sure to have your checkbook or credit card with you. Most schools require payment at registration, although you may not have to pay the full amount then. Most schools have payment plans.

Be sure to have your Social Security number with you. Many schools use your Social Security number as your student identification number.

Do not stay away because you don't have the full tuition at registration. Check with the office for financial aid if you have a financial concern. More about this in a moment.

### Don't Wait Until the Last Minute

If you wait until the last minute to enroll, you are likely to find that the class is already full. Once the allotted spaces are gone, no more students will be admitted. That is why it is practical to go to the college a few weeks or even a term ahead of registration to talk with an advisor.

If you want to enroll in a certificate program (usually one year) or in one of the degree programs (from one to three years) talk to an academic adviser at the college *a few months* before starting the program! Here's why:

1. You may need to take special examinations.
2. To enter a degree program you will probably have to obtain a transcript from your high school to show that you graduated and passed all required subjects. (Note: Obtaining a transcript takes time and usually requires a small fee. You may run into delays if you don't send the fee with your request.)
3. You may have to take an English or math placement test. Many entering students do not have the basic skills in math, spelling, grammar, and vocabulary. They need to brush up those skills.

### Getting In After a Course is Full

If it is essential that you take a specific course at a certain time of day, but discover that the course is already filled up, don't despair. All schools allow late registration. We suggest doing the following as a possible strategy: Wait until the first class is held, show up and attend the first class. Then, when the class is over, approach the instructor. Tell him or her about your problem. Ask politely for permission to attend the course.

Most instructors, when approached in this manner, will allow one more student into the class. This tactic requires some nerve and assertiveness, but it is a way to get into a needed class.

### Prior Life Experience (PLE) Credits

Some colleges and universities offer prior life experience (PLE) credits. You may receive credit for experiences you have already

had. For example: if you have run your own business for ten years and now wish to earn a business degree, PLE credit may be a possibility for you.

Educational institutions offering these credits usually have workshops to help you document your learning. A sizeable amount of writing and validation is required but you may be rich in life experience and able to qualify for official college credit.

Ronald, for example, served as a law enforcement officer for many years when he had to leave the force because of an injury. He had taken so many classes and workshops in law enforcement over the years that he received 56 credit hours as a result of a prior learning assessment. His case is unusual but demonstrates what is possible. Most students receive 10 to 20 hours credit for prior learning.

Jane had traveled extensively with her husband, a career military officer. She had visited most of the countries in Europe. She also could speak German fluently. With documented validation she was able to earn college credit in European history, sociology, and foreign language.

Marge wanted to complete a degree in home economics that she had started 25 years previously. She had managed a home, raised three children, and participated in many community service activities. When she read the course descriptions required for her major, she saw that her life experience fit nicely into some of the courses. She contacted an advisor and verified that PLE could be used toward her degree. She attended a class on documenting her experiences and was able to rapidly complete the requirements for a home economics degree.

Credits must be paid for, but when the push of time and experience is on your side it is an option to consider.

**College Level Entrance Examination Program (CLEP)**

For information about CLEP tests and how to arrange for them ask your college advisor. About 1500 colleges will accept CLEP scores for certain subjects. The subjects may have been studied in an advance course in high school or special training at work. The CLEP score subjects will be recorded on your transcript at your

time of admission and count as credit toward graduation. You do not have to pay the college for the credits recorded.

### Or You Can Challenge Courses

A third way to get college credit without taking courses is to challenge introductory level courses at the college. If you believe you already know a subject quite well, and the college allows, you can arrange to take the final examination in a course to see if you can pass it. If you do, you can get credit for the course by paying the normal registration fee. Keep in mind, however, that you may miss out on a valuable foundation for more advanced courses in the subject.

### Buy Your Textbooks Early

After you have registered, go to the bookstore and purchase the required textbooks for your courses. The bookstore will have shelves full of textbooks for all the courses. Each shelf will list the instructor and course that the books are for.

Do not wait until after the first class meeting to buy your books because the bookstore may not have ordered enough books for everyone. They generally expect some students to drop the course and bring books back for a refund.

If you buy a used textbook pay close attention to which edition it is. Purchase only the most recent edition of a textbook. Using a used third edition of a textbook when the instructor has switched to the fourth edition will not be acceptable.

When you purchase your textbooks keep your receipts and do not put your name in your books. If for any reason the course is cancelled or you do not want to stay in it, you can sell your books back to the bookstore for a full refund within a certain time limit.

### Locate Your Classrooms

Once you know which classes you will be taking, find the room where each class meets. *Do this before the first day of classes.* When classes start each term, it can be quite hectic fighting through mobs of people to find a place you've never been to! Know where each room is and how you'll get from one place to the next.

### Courses Can Be Dropped

If, however, after attending the first or second classes you realize you've made a serious mistake, then consider dropping the class or transferring to another course. Remember, though, *it is normal to feel somewhat overwhelmed by a course at first*. Talk to the instructor or check with an advisor before dropping. If you drop a course early, most of your money may be refunded.

## How to Get Financial Help

The purpose of financial assistance is to help students who would not otherwise be able to attend college. Financial aid will help pay the difference between what you can afford to pay and what it will cost you to go to college. All families and individuals are treated equally by a standardized evaluation of how much you can afford to pay. Age is no barrier and there are many special funds for minorities and other special populations.

### These People on Welfare Succeeded

Late one evening, 26 year old Carol sat with her baby in a bus station. Unmarried and on welfare, she had no money to pay for a room. Her life had been very rough. She felt that she was bad, abnormal, awful, and that life had passed her by. At that moment a well dressed woman sat down next to Carol and started talking with her. The woman was a college administrator. She said that she had once been on welfare.

The woman encouraged Carol to seek a college education. Carol had dropped out of school when she ran away from home at age 13. She knew she could not read, write, or do arithmetic very well. Carol went to a college and took some tests. They showed that she was learning disabled. With encouragement, however, she managed to learn basic skills and then pass the high school equivalency test. She obtained public assistance funds to take college courses. She found out how to obtain grants and student loans.

She got off welfare. She took as many courses as the college would allow each term. At age 30 she graduated with a B.A. with

honors. Carol went on to earn an M.A. and now helps others find ways to finance their education. (See Sources, page 153.)

Gerald was laid off from an International Harvester plant when the farm recession hit in 1982. He applied for work at 380 companies with no success. He became homeless when his unemployment benefits ran out. He moved out of his apartment and lived for months in a rusty 1960 Mercury. When his car "died" he lived on the streets and did odd jobs whenever he could find them.

He heard about the Dislocated Workers Program, applied, and was enrolled in a community college. With financial aid, he became an A level student in accounting at the University of Iowa.

### Fill Out the Forms

The office for financial aid has information about many sources of money for college students. Be prepared to fill out lots of forms. The forms can appear so overwhelming to the beginning student that some people walk away and never come back. Don't give up! *Many colleges give workshops in how to fill out the forms.* The financial aid personnel will lead you through the forms step-by-step, if necessary.

Many colleges use the financial aid form (FAF) as a way to check eligibility for available scholarships. If you don't qualify this year, be sure to check again. The rules often change. Lack of eligibility one year is not necessarily true the next.

You can get ready to fill out the financial forms by preparing a rough budget of your expenses for the year. Your expenses will include: tuition and fees, books and supplies, room and board, transportation, and personal expenses.

### Money is Available in Many Ways

Scholarships are only one form of aid or financial support offered to students. Many programs provide students with grants and loans. Some funds are specifically reserved for adult students.

A grant is an outright gift, which does not have to be repaid. In some instances, for a person who is without funds, the college may have a way to reduce tuition fees.

Many students qualify for loans at very low interest rates. Most student loans do not have to start to be repaid until after graduation. These funds are available from banks, from the federal government, and other sources.

Financial aid can be in the form of reduced tuition. A growing number of senior citizens are taking advantage of the free or reduced costs for people over 62 or 65.

If you are a veteran, you probably know about your GI benefits provided by the federal government, but do you also know that educational benefits may be provided by your state? The office of financial aid can tell you if you qualify.

The U. S. Department of Education makes funds available to college students through a number of programs:

Pell Grants—up to $2400 for undergraduates enrolled at least half-time; no repayment when a course is completed.

Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants—up to $4000 a year depending on your need; no repayment when a course is completed.

Stafford Loans—up to $2,625 the first two years, increased amounts third and fourth years.

Supplemental Loans for Students—up to $4000 each year for students independent of their parents.

Perkins Loans (formerly called National Direct Student Loans)—amount of loan based on financial need and availability of funds. Up to $4500 for the first two years with increases for third and fourth year students.

**Don't Overlook Your Employer**

Many employers reimburse employees after a course is successfully completed. If yours has not in the past, it still won't hurt to ask. Special arrangements might be made if you take courses that upgrade your skills. You won't know unless you inquire!

Another source of funds is through student employment programs. As you will see in the next chapter, there are many jobs available for students who need income. The main point is that many possibilities exist for helping college students get an edu-

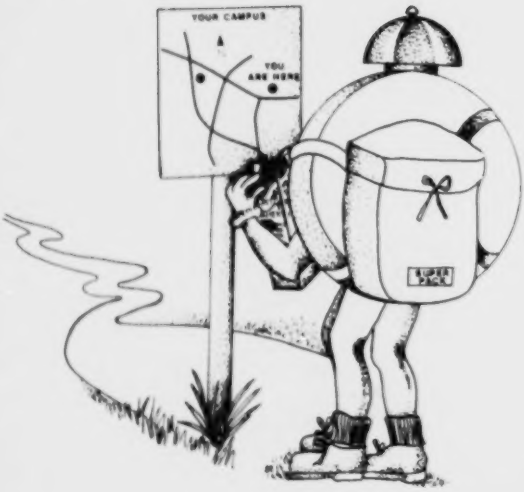
cation. Don't rule yourself out without checking. Inquire to find out about your eligibility.

## Action Review

- ❒ Have I read through the college catalog?
- ❒ Do I have specific courses in mind that I want to take?
- ❒ Have I found out if I need to apply for admission?
- ❒ Have I checked with the financial aid office to find out about my eligibility for financial assistance?
- ❒ Have I inquired about educational benefits or support from my employer?
- ❒ Do I know how to register for the courses I want?
- ❒ Do I know where my classrooms are located?

## Study Buddy Activity

Talk about what difficulties you encountered trying to get registered for courses. Talk about the courses you plan to take. Help each other look into ways to tailor your selection of courses to fit your unique interests and needs. Be frank with each other about your financial needs. Someone in your group may know of a way to get extra financial help.




*Chapter 4*

# Orientation: Getting Acquainted with Your Campus

*Could you tell another student about all the free services available to you?*

*Do you know what recreation facilities are available?*

*Do you know where the health service is?*

*Have you found out about transportation services?*

*Do you know where to go with questions about class schedules?*

## Be Assertive About Orientation

Your college tries to inform you of every facility and service available to you. Regardless of how hard the orientation leaders try, they are bound to overlook something. This chapter describes the college support services and facilities you should know about. You can use this chapter as your checklist. As you go through whatever form of orientation your college offers, become familiar with all the services and facilities we list that are offered by your college.

If you have completed an orientation program, use this chapter to review your knowledge of campus services. Orientation is a continuous process throughout your time in college. You will need the various resources at one time or another. Make sure you know what they offer and where they are located.

If possible, pay a visit to every service or facility to check it out. For example, most colleges have learning skills centers and writing improvement centers. Often, to find out about what these support services can offer you, you'll need to stop in and have a chat with a staff member. *Don't hesitate.* You'll usually find that staff members of college support services are trying to think up ways to insure that students make use of their services.

## Take the Tour

Most colleges provide guided tours during the orientation program. In addition, you will probably be provided with loads of information about the programs, facilities, and opportunities available. The information given to you will probably contain a survival kit. The packet should describe various services and facilities available to you.

If you look around campus, you will find free copies of the college newspaper. The first edition of the new school year will probably be a special orientation edition to acquaint new students with the various activities on campus.

The more quickly you become familiar with your campus, the more you will feel at home. Learn why certain offices and facilities exist, even if you don't use them now. At some point it may be to

your advantage to know where and why most offices and services exist. You will also feel more comfortable and relaxed as you get to know your surroundings.

## College Services Checklist

### Academic Advising

Academic advisors are available to provide information on class schedules, course requirements for specific majors, eligibility for certain programs, and such. Peer advisors, specially trained students, may meet with you to help with course selection.

☆ Find an advisor you enjoy talking with and meet with this person at least once a term. This can be one of your *most important* contacts.

### Activity Center or Student Union

The student center is the heart of student activity. You may find cafeterias, art displays, television rooms, reading rooms, possibly a bowling alley, a barber shop, ping-pong tables, and pool tables. The student center on every campus is unique, so take time to familiarize yourself with this building. On the bulletin boards you will find announcements for various student activities such as theater productions and films shown on campus.

☆ TIP: Find out if lockers are available for rent. A locker at school is a great place to leave heavy books, keep your lunch, or store an extra umbrella. It also serves as a place where friends can leave notes for you!

### Admissions/Orientation/Office for Re-entry Students

On larger campuses these will probably be separate offices. On smaller campuses they may be combined. In any case, these are the offices with people who know the answers to your questions or who know how to get the answers. That's their job.

Colleges are not sure what to call students who are not the traditional student coming directly from high school. Terms such as "non-traditional" or "re-entry" may be used.

**Bookstore**

Take some time to go through the bookstore. Browse around to see where supplies and different books are located. The front part of the store usually contains *trade* books. These are books available to the general public and are sold in almost all college bookstores. At the back of the store you will probably find a textbook section. Books will be arranged on shelves listed by course numbers within the different departments of the college.

**Campus Security**

Find out how to get help from campus security in case of an emergency. They are the people to call first when any sort of help from police is needed. Make friends with the security officers. They appreciate it. They may help with minor car problems or contact your family if you have an emergency.

**Cashier/Business Office**

All monetary matters involving tuition are handled here. Be sure to inquire about any available payment plans. The cashier's office will probably cash checks for any person with a valid student body ID card.

**Center for Adult Students**

Many schools now have a designated area where older students, sometimes called *re-entry* or *non-traditional* students, can go for information about problems or concerns, or to meet a friend.

**Counseling Center/Career Counseling**

In these centers professional counselors are available for private sessions with students who want to talk about personal concerns. If you run into problems with instructors or other school personnel, counselors can serve as your advocate. Career counselors usually have access to an array of instruments/materials designed to help students clarify their career goals. These centers usually have books, cassette tapes, and other materials you can use or borrow. The services are usually free.

### Child Care Center

If you have preschool children, the college may provide day care. You can bring children to school with you and for a low fee have the child cared for and fed by professionals while you are in school. Some colleges have provisions for school-age children to study on campus while parents attend night classes.

### Dean of Students

This is the office to contact if you have any questions or difficulties that are not immediately handled someplace else. The dean of students is responsible for seeing that you are well taken care of and will help solve problems that may be interfering with your college success.

### Dean of Instruction

This is an important office on every campus. Here you will find help with many kinds of academic questions and problems, including how to change a mistake in your transcript of grades, remove an incomplete in a course, get permission to take more than the allowed number of course hours, waive a course requirement, get into a course already filled, or arrange for a special academic program.

### Office for Students with Disabilities

Special assistance will be available to help physically challenged or learning disabled students succeed. Such assistance may include notetakers, readers, writers, or sign language interpreters. The assistance counselors will have many practical suggestions. They can help students obtain adaptive equipment, transportation, and other services from your state's vocational rehabilitation department. Assessment for learning disabilities is available as well.

### Health Service

Every campus has medical help available for emergency medical care and treatment. The health service may be a resource for information, programs, and services on alcohol and drug abuse,

birth control, blood pressure testing, cholesterol screening, and so forth. Costs are usually included in your fees or are very low. Inquire, if you wish, about student health insurance. Rates are low and the insurance may cover family members.

### Learning Center

Many schools have special centers where you go to learn a specific subject. You tell the person in charge what you want. You will then be assigned to a booth with a set of earphones, a television monitor, or a computer terminal. You work at your own speed at the lesson you are there to complete. You can stay with it as long as you wish. Don't feel intimidated; the person in charge will be glad to explain how everything works.

### Library

Visit the library and take some time to walk through it. You can go almost any place in the library to see what is available. You will notice that in a college library there are many desks, tables, and study areas. Librarians usually enjoy telling people about library services. Take advantage of their helpfulness.

Most libraries have computers, typing rooms, video viewing rooms, conference areas, and quiet rooms for listening to music. For rest and relaxation (R&R), or research, this is one resource you should not overlook.

### Registrar

The registrar's office is responsible for keeping all academic records. If you have earned college credit elsewhere, the registrar's office can give you information on how to claim credit and obtain documentation so that it will apply to your program. After you graduate, the registrar's office is the place that provides transcripts when requested.

### Sports Center

As a student, you should have access at certain times to the sports facilities. Take time to inquire about this, because having a nice swim between classes may be exactly the right thing for you. There

will be an exercise room that you can use when available. There may be a track for jogging, and other possibilities for exercise. You may be able to check out equipment free of charge.

> I found that during certain hours I could use the workout rooms used by the athletes! I could use the track and courts even if I wasn't taking a physical education class. And for a small fee I could occasionally take one of my daughters swimming. —MK

**Student Activities Office**

Every college has a number of student-run organizations. The student body president, other officers, and many student project coordinators are located in the student activities office.

**Student Employment/Job Placement Office**

This office lists jobs that local employers have available for students looking for off-campus work. There are many jobs in every community that fit perfectly with being a student. This office will provide assistance with résumé writing and interviewing skills. They will help you find employment upon graduation.

**Student Housing**

Your college may provide student housing in its own residence halls. It may also coordinate placement of students into private homes and apartments in the nearby area. Local landlords may register the availability of housing with this office. Larger colleges will have housing for married students and their families.

**Study Skills Center**

This center is staffed with specialists on teaching people how to read faster, remember better, pass tests more easily, and succeed in the academic aspects of school.

**Transportation Office**

If you have to commute to school you may need a permit to park in the campus parking lots. Inquire about car pools or buses as an

alternative to driving your own car. Parking space is often difficult to locate. Plan ahead. Check this out before starting classes.

## Explore Your College

Take time to get acquainted with your school. Be active and curious, not passive or timid. Learn about the many resources available to you. You will feel comfortable coming to campus more quickly, and the more you locate and use resources, the more successful you will be.

☆ REMEMBER: *The entire school exists to help you get the education you want!*

## Action Review

- ❒ Have I explored the campus to find out what is available to students?
- ❒ Do I know where the health service is?
- ❒ Do I know how to reach campus security?
- ❒ Do I know where to inquire about transportation, day care, career counseling, and other services?
- ❒ Have I familiarized myself with the activities center?
- ❒ Do I feel well oriented to the college?

## Study Buddy Activity

Plan a resources treasure hunt. Make up a list of places, offices, centers, and services you want to know about. Be sure to include the nearby neighborhood in your exploration. Find the location of stores, bank branches, the post office, copy centers, eating places, book stores, yogurt shops, and best pizza place. Split up into search teams. Divide up the list. Agree to meet at a certain place at a certain time. Afterwards talk with each other about what you found.

*Chapter 5*

# Your Family and Friends: How to Gain Their Support and Encouragement

*Do you feel guilty about doing something just for yourself?*

*Can you ask people for help when you need it?*

*Do you wonder if you will upset your family or your friends because you are going to school?*

*Do you know how to develop and follow a positive plan of action for getting the help and support you need?*

*Do you understand what it means to give high-quality time to others?*

## There's a Way, If You Will...

Your family and friends do not have to feel deprived by the extra time you spend in school. If mealtime conversation is filled with interesting conversational tidbits, if dreams of an exciting tomorrow are shared with those who are close, and they see a happier, more enthusiastic person, they will be glad for you.

## You Can Make It Work

Making the pieces fit, maintaining relationships and school successfully takes time and planning. You will not find all the adjustments or solutions overnight. Fitting into a new role is never easy and it may take six months to a year before you and those close to you have made the transition.

Getting an education is the best insurance you can buy for a successful, secure future. Learning is a lifelong experience. Finding the right combination for relationships, work, and school can pay off big dividends in personal and professional satisfaction.

## How to Gain the Support You Need

Here is a simple and effective way to get support, help, encouragement, and understanding from your family and friends:

1. Take some time privately to think about the support you need from others in your new role as a student.
2. Decide to seek that support.
3. Talk to the people whose support you are seeking. Explain why going to school is important to you. Ask what worries they might have and listen with understanding. Ask what positive feelings they have about your going back to school and what advantages they may see for themselves.
4. Be very specific in asking for the support you need—undisturbed time alone, encouragement, household chores done, etc.
5. Track positives with people. Reward any actions you regard as positive, helpful, or supportive with thanks and appreciation. Give others immediate feedback about what you like.

### Plan Ahead

Think through what you want to talk about and what requests you will make. Select the best time to talk.

Taking night classes may mean that the family mealtime will be disrupted. If you are working full time and going to school part time, you will have less time together. Find out how they feel about this change and empathize with their concerns rather than telling them not to feel the way they do. Let them know that your time together is important to you.

If people are reluctant to talk about what is ahead, make some effort to get them to think about the months and years ahead. It is essential to keep the lines of communication open to avoid a big blowup someday at just the wrong time.

Don't assume the worst, you may be surprised!

> Before I started to school I sat down with the three teenage children who were still at home and talked with them about what changes might occur in their lives as a result of my commitment to school. The kids were wonderful! They encouraged me so heartily I should have been suspicious, but I wasn't....Years later, after they were out of high school, they told me they were eager to get me involved elsewhere so that they would have more freedom to come and go as they wanted! --MK

### Let People Know What You Want

Students with families have requests such as these:

- I would like my three teenage children to do more housework, so that I will have more time for my studies.
- I'd like my husband and kids to fix dinner for themselves a couple of nights a week when I am at class.
- It would be nice to have my wife ask me about my courses and spend a little time talking about my experiences as a student.
- I'd appreciate being left alone to study three nights a week; that means not knocking on my door or interrupting to tell me about something on TV.

Why don't people get what they want? The answer is surprising. They usually have not asked.

Most of us were raised not to be selfish. Some selfishness is essential, however, when expressed in a way that is not demanding.

Most people report that once they have the courage to ask for support, they receive far more than they expected. Some students report that when they finally ask for what they want, the reply is "Why didn't you ask before? Sure, I'll be glad to do that!"

## Getting Help at Home

Anyone who manages a home knows there are certain maintenance tasks that must be done—homework, or not. When dirty socks and underwear carpet the floor, it is time for some cooperation and delegation. Most children over the age of seven, and most partners, can learn to pick up, sort, and put the clothes in the washing machine.

Even a four-year-old can help fold clothes and put them away. To reverse an old quote, "Ask not what you can do for others, but what can they do for you!" As roles change, it is time to delegate responsibilities to other household members.

Have a meeting with the family each week to develop a chore schedule. On a piece of paper, list the jobs each person agrees to do and specify when it will be done. It helps to rotate the responsibility for developing the weekly list to others. Participate in the discussion, of course, but when you have someone else write down the various duties and place the list in a conspicuous place, it will seem less imposed by you.

Post your own weekly time schedule in a conspicuous place so that all can see where you will be and when. When members of your household see that Thursday evening from 7:30 to 9:00 is a study period, they will be more likely to leave you alone, *especially if you stick with your own schedule!*

☆ TIP: Others will be less likely to interrupt or intrude during your study hours if you set aside specific times during the week for each important person.

### Quality is Better Than Quantity

Reserve one solid hour each week for each important person. Others will be less demanding when they know they have their own special time with you. For example, talk with your daughter Cheryl about when she'd like her hour. Write "Cheryl's hour" in big letters on your schedule. Then make sure she gets her hour with you. Do not try to fit more than one person into the same hour. Make these hours very important to you. Avoid missing one or changing one if you possibly can.

Let the others decide what will be done during their hour. Self-esteem develops or is maintained by being in close contact with others, by being seen as unique, by feeling important, and from being able to influence the world. So don't plan this hour, let the person influence what you do together.

Be curious about what develops. Many people who have done this report that their personal relationships and contacts with family members improve significantly.

Working together on tasks at home can be important time together. As one sets the table, another scrubs the potatoes, someone unloads the dishwasher, and the microwave zaps the main course, each person talks about their day. Time for sharing is essential when you have to juggle work, home, and school. Sharing, caring, and doing the work together can all be done at the same time.

### Use a Little Psychology

Thousands of experiments conducted by psychologists over the years have established the validity of a principle that affects the actions of others. The principle is:

☆ *Actions that are rewarded tend to increase.*

Consequently,

1. If you thank, compliment, and reward others for doing what is helpful to you they will do even more.
2. If you stop rewarding, they'll do less of what is helpful.

What rewards can you use? Here is a list of suggestions from adult students about things they've done:

- Express appreciation.
- Say "thank you."
- Buy or fix their favorite food for them.
- Give hugs and kisses.
- Give treats or little gifts.
- Be interested in their lives.
- Tell them about something interesting at school.
- Speak highly of them to others.
- Give them back rubs and neck massages.
- Let them feel that your success is their success.
- Ask what they would like from you.
- Leave nice notes for them; send cards.

When you speak clearly about what you would like from others and then follow up with "thank-yous" and rewards, you usually get results that exceed your expectations. Most people respond in very positive ways. In fact, you may be overwhelmed by all the love and support others show you.

**Expect Surprises**

Expect some surprises and be prepared to make some adjustments of your own when your life changes. Letting people do things their own way may be difficult at first, but a positive attitude and a sense of humor can pull you through.

In one family, for example, the children (grade-school age) volunteered to cook dinner one evening a week. They accepted full responsibility for shopping, cooking, and cleaning up afterward. Their mother said she assumed the meal would be done the way she always did it. She reported:

> The first time they "cooked" dinner they met me at the door all excited and led me to the dining room before I could take off my coat. I expected steaming plates with vegetables, salad, and so forth. When I walked in my eyes almost fell out of my head. Their idea of a great dinner was boiled hot dogs served on paper plates

with a bottle of pop, a bag of potato chips, and Twinkies for dessert! I didn't know whether to collapse in hysterical laughter or lecture them on the right way to shop, cook, and serve a nutritious meal. I did neither. As I sat there eating a barely warm wiener, I told myself it wouldn't kill me to let them do it their way. I've had some interesting meals since then. Peanut butter sandwiches and pie aren't too bad. And the paper plates are real time and energy savers.

## Things Don't Always Work Out

Some students find that their home situations do not get better. Some family members may become difficult. A partner may start to drink more or stay out late. Children may begin to get into trouble or have difficulty at school.

If anything this extreme takes place, it is important to seek professional advice and counseling. Get to know what services are available at the college. There are many experts you can talk to and a variety of sources of help. Other students can provide support and practical advice. Ask around and you are likely to discover that more good solutions are possible than you imagined.

### They Need Emotional Support

It can be easy to forget that family and friends need some nurturing, too. An instructor once said to an over-achieving beginner, "When it comes to a choice of studying extra to get an A on the mid-term, working overtime, or taking your children to the zoo—take the kids to the zoo." A little attention in time saves resentment in the long run.

When you return to school, people close to you may react as though you are changing the rules on them. A change in your daily routines forces them to change theirs, and they may resist.

Adult students find the return easier if they are prepared for the mixed emotions that others may have about their changed roles. It helps to understand their feelings, and then help them see that your going back to school is good for them as well.

Bev had four children when she decided to return to school.

Two seemed to adjust fine to the new schedule, but one daughter was getting more "mouthy" and her son said resentfully, "Why can't you be like other mommies and just stay home?"

The next term Bev scheduled classes so she could be at home when the children came home from school. She started a ten-minute contact time for each child where sharing the day and hugging and touching was made a priority when they first came home. The discipline and resentment problems disappeared.

### It May Take a While

The more your family and friends have been dependent on you, the more difficult it will be for them to be more responsible for themselves. If you meet resistance, the change can be difficult. They may become upset and refuse to talk. They may accuse you of being selfish and of not caring about them.

There are many reasons for such reactions. A husband may secretly fear that if his wife becomes capable, educated, and employable, she may decide to leave. A wife may feel neglected having her husband work full time and then devote evenings and weekends to school. Your friends miss your calls.

Try to not let others make you feel guilty if they become upset. Let them know you understand their feelings but don't take too much responsibility for their unhappy reactions. Would you let a ten-year-old control how you drive or where you go? Are others better qualified to make decisions about your life than you are? Does your partner know your needs better than you do?

Hold true to your plan for yourself while you give others time to adjust to this new way of life. Let them know how important they are to you.

## Develop a Plan and Be Positive

Going to school can solve problems. Try to use your returning to school as an opportunity to improve your relationship with your loved ones. Healthful relationships are based on people's supporting each other's growth and development, not dependence. Your returning to school could lead to deeper, closer, and warmer feelings of love and appreciation than you ever thought possible.



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George was feeling out of touch with his wife, Kathy. They both worked and went to school. It seemed they never talked anymore.

Together they looked at both of their schedules. They made Wednesday lunch and Sunday morning brunch dates top priorities. George says now: "I'd never think of missing one of these dates. That is the time we still know we are in tune with each other and share our triumphs and frustrations. We are back to being best friends."

## Include Them

Make them feel included in your world, not excluded. Try to create the feeling "We are going to college." If your instructor will allow a visit, and if appropriate, consider taking a family member or friend to a class.

The more they know about what you do, the more they can understand and support you. A Saturday tour around campus can help introduce them to your new world. Take your spouse or older children to athletic events or concerts. Find out if they can use the Physical Education facilities. Bring them to the library with you some evening.

Going back to school can be the best gift you give school-age children. As they study, you study. The message comes through loud and clear; education is a priority here. Gathering together to do your homework can be much more bonding than "zoning out" in front of the TV.

Also, when children know you struggle with school, it gets you off the parental pedestal and on a level leading to better understanding. If your child can help you learn math, so much the better. If they can help demystify the world of computers, you both benefit!

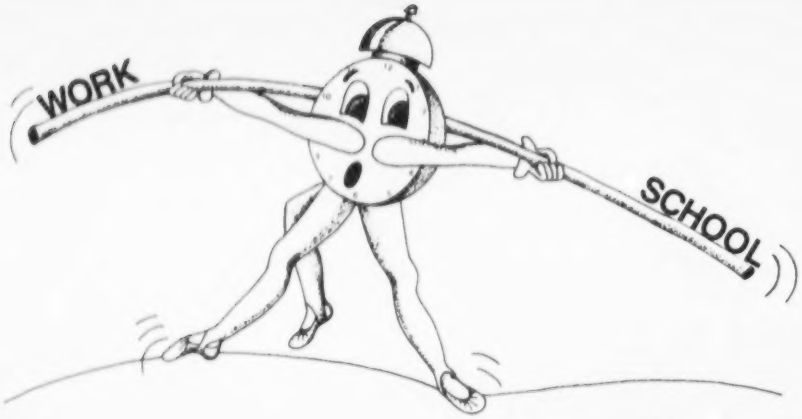
Family and friends need to know they are still a priority in your life. Give them good quality time. Time will be treasured more as the demands of school increase. TV and for fun reading may bite the dust, but good personal relationships are an essential success foundation as you juggle work, home, and school.

## Action Review: Checklist of Useful Actions

- ❒ Have I talked with others about returning to school and how this will affect our lives?
- ❒ Have I listened well to the concerns of others?
- ❒ Have I asked for support in a direct, clear, and specific way?
- ❒ Can I ask for what I need without feeling guilty or demanding?
- ❒ Do I tell people often enough how much I appreciate their efforts to help?
- ❒ Do I have a variety of reinforcements available that I can use to express appreciation?
- ❒ Have I acquainted myself with all the professional resources available to me at school in case I need advice?
- ❒ Do I have an active, positive plan to make things work out?

## Study Buddy Activity

Talk with each other about what you have done to enlist the support of others. Discuss how it feels to make selfish requests. Help each other find ways to handle challenges. Compliment each other for progress you have made. Be sure to tell each other about amusing incidents and your successes.




*Chapter 6*

# How to Balance Going to College with Working

*Do you know over 50% of all adult college students work part or full time?*

*Do you know part-time college students account for the greatest increase in college population?*

*Do you know most careers will require you to be a life-long learner?*

*Do you know you can earn college credit by combining work and school?*

## Scheduling Work and School

Colleges have responded to the needs of students who work. The times and places you take your college classes are becoming more flexible. Evening and weekend courses are available. All-day workshops add options.

If your working hours are flexible you may be able to schedule your courses on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays only, or just mornings or afternoons to accommodate your job. Some companies will arrange a four day work week so you can take three day seminars or attend weekend classes.

Note also that *you do not have to take all of your courses from the same college!* If a course at another college fits your schedule better you may be able to take that course and transfer the credit. Transferring credit is easy to do between state-supported colleges.

### Course-Load Guidelines

If you work full time, you probably should take no more than two classes in college at one time. The rule of thumb: for every hour of class time, you need two or three hours to do the homework for that class. Thus, if you spend six hours a week in class, you will spend 12 to 18 hours a week in preparation. Add that to a 40-hour work week and you have a sizable commitment. Travel time from work to school and back to home must also be considered.

If you are going to school full time, work outside school should be kept to 20 or fewer hours. If you work more than 20 hours, work, school, or both are likely to suffer from the overload.

A few students choose jobs that pay less if studying is possible at times on the job. Some students know they need the physical release of a lot of activity after classes and deliberately choose a job involving physical labor.

Work-study jobs can allow split-shift work around class schedules. For some, splitting up school and work is helpful; for others, it is fragmenting. There is no right or wrong way to

combine work and school but there is a way that works best for you. The challenge is to find it.

## Employers Will Help You

Employers need educated workers. They need people who can learn fast, people who can learn new technology and new skills, people who can adapt to a rapidly changing world.

In recent years employers have created many ways to encourage, support, and pay for the education of the workers they need. It is estimated that industry now spends from $40 to $60 billion on educational training each year. Employers work closely with colleges to offer a variety of ways to blend working with your college education.

## Merging Learning and Work

Most colleges now offer programs for getting college credit for work experience. Credit is offered in a variety of ways that include cooperative education, work-study programs, internships, and practicums.

### Cooperative Work Experience

Cooperative work experience allows a student to work and earn college credit while exploring a career choice. When a student has chosen a major such as business, computer science, or engineering, the school's cooperative education department can help arrange work experience in the field.

A student may have a particular job site in mind, or the cooperative work specialist may find an appropriate work placement in the student's major field of study. Specific learning experiences are defined and the student is supervised in meeting the objectives. The average co-op student earns $7,000 per year, although some placements are arranged on a volunteer basis.

Cooperative education personnel maintain close contact with companies designated as co-op sites. Everything is done to ensure a good learning experience.

It is not possible to receive retroactive credit in co-op, but it is possible to earn college credit for present employment. If your present work is within the field of your college major, or you are doing certain kinds of work to see if you wish to make it your major field of study, it is worth contacting your cooperative education department to look into the possibility of receiving college credit for your present job.

### Work Study

Colleges hire many students to work on campus. The federal government provides funds for the college work-study program. Work-study students must qualify for their jobs by showing financial need.

Student-help jobs are also available. They require only that the student is competent to do the work.

Those in the work-study and student-help programs fill in at libraries, locker rooms, receptionists' desks, laboratories, cafeterias, counseling offices, school grounds, and many other college locations. Usually, they work for the minimum wage but the work experience can be valuable training. It can help clarify career goals and be included on a résumé. These jobs often allow you some study time on the job and your supervisor shifts your work hours to fit your class schedule and exam times.

### Everyone Benefits

If you haven't had much paid work experience, a work-study job can be a good confidence builder. It is a way to prove your worth in the work world. The recent trend is for more organizations to offer positions to students. They recognize that involving students in work experience is a good way to screen potential employees. It also helps the work-study student to build job contacts.

Joan, for example, was a single parent struggling to get off welfare. She started working for the counseling department in a clerical capacity as a work-study student. Her work and life experience helped solidify her choice of social work as a college major. The department was able to set up a co-op work experi-

ence to help her earn college credits. Later, when Joan needed a practicum site for her degree, the counseling department set up an information referral position in job placement. When she was granted her degree in social work, Joan had incorporated enough practical, professional experience to have a decided edge on other graduates. Valuable contacts and recommendations were hers. Securing a job, using her new credentials, was not difficult.

**Internship Programs**

An internship is a training position that usually pays you for acquiring a skill. Internships may be offered where expensive equipment or the need for highly trained professionals make on-the-job training cost effective. Prerequisite skills are taught in the classroom, but most of the new learning takes place in the work place.

Two vocational career fields that use internships extensively are electronic engineering technician and radio/TV broadcasting. These industries grow and change so rapidly that few colleges have the funds or facilities for the latest equipment. Neither can the colleges meet salary scales to hire top people in these fields.

A partnership is formed where education experts break the learning process into manageable steps, write the curriculum, assign credit, provide on-site consultation, and see that complementary classwork is provided. Internship programs often lead to a two-year associate degree, or maybe a requirement for an advanced degree.

**Practicum Training Experiences**

Practicum experiences differ from internships in that they often require a year or more of classroom work before a student is allowed on-the-job practical experience. Para-professional programs (teacher assistant, legal assistant, alcohol/drug counselor) have significant practical experience as an essential part of their vocational degree program.

On-the-job training may take anywhere from three months

to more than a year. This practicum training is coupled with classroom discussion and job supervision. (Note: students *rarely* receive payment for practicum experience. The personal supervision you receive from experts is valuable compensation.)

## Balancing Predictable School and Work Demands

Many jobs have peak demand periods. In school, it's mid-terms and finals. In retail sales, pre-Christmas shopping will keep you hopping. For colleges, fall registration is a busy time for support services. If you have school-age children summer vacation can be extra demanding.

When work times are predictably busy, lighten your school load to accommodate busy times. Get that paper in early; move ahead in your reading; talk with your teacher to get a jump on early work—or an approved delay, if needed.

For those who juggle work and school, knowing about and using your options are survival tools. Trying to cram full-time work, full-time school, and demanding personal relationships into twenty-four hours can lead a person to early burn-out. It is not how fast you can get there, but rather, are you enjoying the process? Can you go the distance? That's what counts!

## Bread and Butter Jobs (that don't interfere with academic success)

If you need a "bread and butter" job to help with expenses while you go to school, don't expect it to be the delight of your dreams. You can, however, make it work with your school schedule. It would be a bonus if it were somehow related to your career choice, but it does not have to be connected. What is essential is that you can earn a certain amount of money to take care of the "bread and butter" of survival.

How do you find such a job? The same rules apply here that you use searching for career employment. In a nutshell:

- Know what skills and personal qualities you have to offer.
- Let everyone know you are looking for a job.

- Be prepared to state your case with enthusiasm.
- Practice common job interview questions and answers.
- Make contacts at best hours and days, Tuesday-Thursday, 10 a.m.-11 a.m. and 2 p.m.-3 p.m.
- Dress for success, be clean, careful, conservative, classic.
- Let your attitude show you really want the job.
- You "make it or break it" in the first three minutes of the interview.
- Keep employer's needs in mind.
- Have accurate information ready for job application.
- Tell them the best time of day to contact you and what phone number to call.
- Send a thank-you note for the interview.
- Before accepting a job consider the location. Is it close to campus or will commuting be a problem?
- Be alert to opportunities. A "bread and butter" job can lead to a "caviar and champagne" career!

Hopefully, this information has expanded your thinking about what is available for college students in the way of employment these days. Look around. Talk with people. It may be that you can find a work situation that fits your schedule and your educational program while providing you with much needed income.

## College, Work, Family, Friends, and Time For You

The guidelines and suggestions in chapters 5 and 6 are being used successfully by many students. It is possible to combine going to college with studying, family life, a job, and still have time for yourself too. Here is what one student reported:

> I had no ideas how many hours of studying were necessary for class. I found myself adding up the hours in a week and realized something would have to give. I sat down and developed my "Study Schedule," my "Me-Time Schedule," my "Family Schedule," and finally, my "Work Schedule." Now my time is allocated so that I can make the best use of it.

Many students find that when they organize their time better, ask others for help or understanding, and work only on the most important things to be done, they can accomplish much more than they ever thought possible. As we've said before, you don't have to be an extraordinary person to succeed in college. All you have to do is be in control of what you do with yourself.

## Action Review

Check the following list for balancing work and school:

- ❒ Do I make realistic school and work demands on myself?
- ❒ Have I explored the posibility of getting college credit for work experience?
- ❒ Have I asked my employer about ways that my educational efforts could be paid for or reimbursed?
- ❒ Have I looked at new developments and changes in the job market?
- ❒ Have I combined employment with career development opportunities?

## Study Buddy Activity

Do the members of your group work? What sort of balance between work and study have you each arranged? What do you know about ways to work for pay, earn college credit, and gain on-the-job experience? Does someone in your group have some job information you can use?

*Chapter 7*

# How to Succeed in College

*Can you describe how ordinary people succeed as college students?*

*Do you know what it means to view college as a learning environment?*

*Do you know how to take good lecture notes?*

*Can you explain the affect of self-esteem on success in college?*

*I'm a single parent, low-income, first generation student and a black female. I'm surely one that sociologists would label as disadvantaged. But with the assistance of the special services program and my desire, my commitment and strong will to distance myself from the labels and statistics, I have achieved my goal of completing college.*

Edna Mae Pitman
1989 TRIO Achiever Award Winner
(One of 26 college students in the nation selected by the National Council of Educational Opportunity Association from more than 425,000 students in TRIO programs.)

## Success in Each Course = Success in College

You can do really well in college without being an ideal student. Success comes from being motivated to succeed and doing the things that lead to success in your courses. Thousands of ordinary people, people who are nervous, have doubts, and who didn't stand out in high school do very well in college.

Students who do consistently well in the courses they take are those who:

- find out at the first class meeting when all the tests will be held and when papers or projects are due.
- attend all classes.
- sit up front.
- prepare for each class in advance.
- ask intelligent questions during class.
- take good lecture notes.
- organize their time with a personal schedule.
- study regularly.
- set specific study goals each time they study.
- hand in course work on time.
- prepare for tests by writing practice tests.
- stop studying when they reach their study goals.

Successful students are also self-motivated, appreciate and encourage other students, have strong self-esteem and self-confidence, develop good study habits, and associate with other successful students. More about this later.

## Find Out What is Required

Successful students actively determine the requirements for each course. During the first lecture they get answers to these key questions:

Which chapters in the textbook will be covered?
When will the exams be given?
What material will each exam cover?
What type of questions will be on the exams—essay, multiple choice?
Will other work be required?
When will the work be due?
How will grades in the course be determined?
What are the instructor's office hours? The location?
Does the instructor have an outline of the most important terms and concepts to be covered?

These questions are a starting point. Others will occur as you go along. This is why having the phone number of another student in each of your classes can be very useful.

Some instructors provide handouts. If you don't receive a handout, be sure to write everything down in your notebook.

☆ Note: Don't make instructors feel they are being cross-examined. Be assertive but *tactful*.

## Get Ready for the Avalanche: The Smartest Way to Organize Your Notebooks

We suggest that you purchase a separate, three ring notebook for each course. Select a different color notebook for each one. This helps avoid the "Oh no! I can't believe I brought the wrong notebook today!" experience. Be sure to write your name, address, and phone number in each notebook.

Purchase notebooks that have at least five color tabbed sections: the first contains the course syllabus and any other instructions specific to the course; the second holds paper for your class notes; the third holds assignments ready to hand in; the fourth

holds assignments/tests handed back; the fifth includes extra handouts from your instructor.

How do you place all the handouts into a three ring notebook? Either purchase a small, inexpensive hole puncher or find the location of a three hole puncher you can use.

Organizing your course materials in this way will make it much easier to be a successful student. Reminder: *After going to all this trouble, be sure to take your notebook and a pen to each class!*

## Take Good Lecture Notes

Writing down what the instructor says in lectures is active listening. You are also being realistic about the nature of human memory. Human beings quickly forget most of what they hear no matter how much they would like to remember.

Several days after hearing a lecture, the best that most students can do is to recall about *ten percent* of what was said. If you ask a student who doesn't take notes to fill you in on something the instructor said last week, you will see how important note taking is for accurate remembering. So, unless you tape record the lectures or alternate note taking with a friend, you need to take notes at every lecture.

Always take notes in the proper class notebook in the proper section. Do not put lecture notes from different courses in the same notebook. Date each day's notes.

Lectures are like textbook chapters. Each usually has a main theme and makes several important points. If you listen for them, they will be easier to hear.

We encourage you to take lecture notes in outline form. This habit will help you to focus on the main points that can be turned into questions. Your job is to record these questions and to make sure you know how your instructor wants them answered. The most commonly used outline form is this:

I. (roman numerals for major topics)
   A. (capital letters for major subgroups)
      1. (numbers for supporting examples, people, points)
      2.

B.

1.

a. (small letters for supporting details)

b.

c.

2.

3.

**Guidelines for Taking Notes**

1. During the lecture, take notes on the right-hand side of the paper. Leave a wide margin on the left.
2. Write down complete phrases and statements, rather than single words.
3. Star, highlight, or underline points the instructor emphasizes.
4. After the lecture, take several minutes to complete sentences and fill in material you didn't have time to write. Then turn your outline into test questions. Each lecture will usually supply you with five to seven good exam questions. Write them in the left-hand margin.
5. Leave the back of each page blank. Use it later for taking study notes and writing questions from other sources such as your textbook or assigned reading.

This procedure will help you organize lectures into questions and answers. Plan to come out of each lecture with several questions and answers. They are likely to be on the next test!

**Sample Notes**

If your notes are neat and as close to outlined as possible, you'll have a much better chance of turning them into a good set of questions. These notes were taken at an introductory psychology lecture. The topic was learning.

LEARNING - November 17

I. Behavior Modification—B.F. Skinner
(worked with pigeons)

A. Focus on spontaneous behaviors
   1. Experimenter must wait for behavior to occur
   2. Linked to somatic nervous system

B. Main principles:
   1. Behaviors reinforced tend to increase
      (Note: Term is *reinforcement*, not *reward*)
   2. Behaviors ignored tend to decrease
   3. Behaviors punished may be temporarily suppressed but may increase, punishment can be reinforcing!

C. Tracking positives plan:
   1. Specify the desired observable behavior
   2. Choose a reinforcer (that works)
   3. Measure current level of desired behavior
   4. Watch for slightest increase in the desired behavior
   5. Give reinforcer (quick as possible)

II. Classical Conditioning—Ivan Pavlov
   (He noticed dogs salivating when a bell rang that signaled feeding time.)

A. Focus on inborn reflexes

From notes such as these it is easy to develop practice questions that come close to what the instructor will ask. Note: Using your own abbreviations for frequently repeated words can be helful. Just make sure you can understand your own abbreviations!

## Are You An Active Learner?

It is important to learn how to take good notes because in college the responsibility for learning is the student's, not the teacher's. You cannot sit back passively and expect instructors to entertain you. It is not an instructor's responsibility to push you to learn or to make sure you get your assignments done, not like it may have been in high school. Succeeding in college is your responsibility, and that means being an active learner.

## Are Your Goals Self-Chosen?

Success is to reach a goal. Successful students are students who choose and reach their goals. Getting to any goal you select and work for makes you successful.

The key is to make certain your goals are self-chosen. It is less motivating and less satisfying to have goals that others have selected for you.

If you do not have specific career goals or personal life goals, read the Appendix at the back of the book. Talk with counselors in the careers center at your college. There is a wealth of helpful information available.

> I got top grades. Mostly, it was because I attended all classes, and generally put a lot of time and effort into learning. However, I also made sure that every teacher knew my name by the end of the quarter. I always sat in the front of the room, and asked one or two intelligent questions during every class (the sort of question developed only by studying the class material outside of class). Once I felt that the professor recognized me as a student that cared about the material covered in the class, I made an appointment during office hours and pursued some other aspect of the course material with the professor. In this way, I was able to get the person to add a name to the face of the inquisitive and interested older student who sat in the front row. I'm sure that where my grade was borderline a couple of times, I was given the advantage because of the reputation I so carefully cultivated for myself. It couldn't have hurt.—MK

## How Three "Selfs" Control Your Success in College

Self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-image influence how well you do in college. Self-esteem is your opinion of yourself. Without strong self-esteem your thoughts and actions are controlled by worries about what others might think.

Strong self-esteem is like a thick skin. It acts as a buffer to

shrug off hurtful criticisms. When someone is critical, self-esteem lets you decide you like your opinion of yourself better than theirs. Self-esteem lets you appreciate compliments. It determines how much you learn after something goes wrong.

Self-confidence controls your prediction of how well you will do in a new activity. People lacking self-confidence can't rely on themselves. People with strong self-confidence know they can count on themselves. They expect to handle both adversities and opportunities successfully.

Self-image determines how and where you live and work. People lacking a strong self-image are destined to remain in jobs and roles created by others. A strong, positive self-image is the basis for professional success and successful relationships.

### How To Strengthen Your "Selfs"

Many people were trained by their parents to never brag, be stuck up, or conceited. As a result, many people have never developed a healthy level of self-esteem. It takes courage to defy old parental prohibitions, but it must be done to achieve and enjoy success.

Self-esteem is the easiest to develop because it is the most verbal. It is strengthened by positive self-talk. Make a list of all the things you like and appreciate about yourself.

Self-confidence increases as you develop a reputation with yourself for doing things well. Build self-confidence by selecting a challenging goal and then reaching it.

A positive self-image develops from combining imagination with positive expectations. You might ask "What do I imagine myself doing in three years?" "Where do I work?" "How do I see myself dressing?"

When all "self" factors are strong you believe in yourself, you persevere through difficult times, you stay healthier, the world is a better place for everyone, and people want to help you succeed.

## Good Study Habits Are Very Important

Your habits determine how much you learn during the time you spend studying. Two students may spend the same amount of

time in classes and studying, but the student with good study habits learns more and gets a better education than the student with poor study habits. The chapters ahead will describe good study habits and show how you can develop them.

## Action Review: Checklist for Success

- ❒ Do I act in ways that lead to success in my courses?
- ❒ Do I have well organized course notebooks?
- ❒ Do I take good lecture notes?
- ❒ Am I an active learner?
- ❒ Do I have career or personal life goals that excite me and motivate me?
- ❒ Do I have healthy self-esteem and self-confidence?

## Study Buddy Activity

Make up a your own list describing successful students. To provide contrast, make up a second list of what students do that reduces their chance of succeeding. Include what attitudes and habits you believe help or hinder success in college.

Talk about how easy it is to speak with self-esteem and self-confidence. Do you feel uncomfortable receiving compliments? Getting the best grade on a test? If so, why?

To have extra fun with this activity, each of you arrange to interview several students that you see as successful. Find out what they say about why they are successful. Get back together and compare what you learn from them.

Note: If you write up a summary of your perspectives on succeeding in college, we'd like to see a copy. Our address is at the end of the book. The poem on the next page is what one student shared with us. (It is reprinted here with her permission.)

# A Is For Attitude

The Alphabet of Success

A is for Attitude, it's where it all begins.
B is for Believing in yourself to the end.
C is for Caring enough to do your best.
D is Doing more than just passing the test.
E is for Enjoying the life that you live.
F is the Future rewards school will give.
G is for the Goals you plan to achieve.
H is for Hanging-In-There when tempted to leave.
I is for Imagining the things you can do.
J is for Judging the false from the true.
K is for Knowledge and nothing beats this.
L knows that Labor can be an abyss.
M is for Mistakes which we all make sometimes.
N is Not Letting them keep you behind.
O is the Omnipotent power we possess.
P is for Plowing the fields of success.
Q never Quits because that's defeat.
R stands for Respect, a two-sided treat.
S is for Support that we need to help us through.
T is for Time Management and for Trying, too.
U is Understanding how things should be done.
V knows the Value of having some fun.
W is the Wisdom to be the best you can.
X is a variable, like in algebra, man.
Y is Your choice to be something more.
Z is the Zenith we are all reaching for.

Lynn Reese

*Chapter 8*

# How to Manage Your Time and Study Efficiently

*Do you know how to create monthly and weekly schedules?*

*Are you both a self-starter and a self-stopper?*

*Do you know how to set study goals?*

*Do you know learning is speeded up and study time decreased by outlining the tasks necessary to reach your goals?*

*Do you know why daily "to do" lists are helpful?*

*Can you work on high-priority items while ignoring less important matters?*

## Start With Goals

Study goals help you focus your time and energy. They help you take the step-by-step actions that lead to reaching your dream for a better future. Setting goals is one of the best ways to motivate yourself to study efficiently and effectively.

Students who don't set goals or schedule their time are usually uncertain about what to do from hour to hour. When you identify what you should study to pass a course, and set up a schedule to achieve your study goals, you will be in good shape. Here's how to set study goals and design a schedule to achieve your goals.

### Determine What Your Study Goals Should Be

First, you have to ask, "What do I have to do to pass the course?" In most courses you have to do the following:

1. Pass tests.
2. Pass quizzes.
3. Write papers.
4. Participate in class discussions.
5. Complete projects.

Next, ask these questions when setting up a study schedule:

1. When is each test, paper, or project due?
2. How can I space my studying so that I don't put everything off until the end?
3. How much should I do each day if I wish to accomplish everything on schedule?

After answering these questions, you will be better equipped to design an effective schedule for completing study goals. You will know where you are going, how you will get there, and how to know when you can stop!

## How to Manage Your Time

### Fill in Your Calendar

Your greatest aid will be a time schedule. Start by purchasing a calendar with spaces that you can fill in with important dates and

obligations. Obtain a big year-at-a-glance calendar or a monthly calendar that you can tear apart and pin up on your wall. You want to be able to see what is ahead for the entire term or semester.

Fill in dates when examinations will take place, when papers and projects are due. Fill in all the times that you plan to go to concerts, shows, family gatherings, meetings or other events.

### Create Weekly Schedules

After developing a picture of your major commitments for the months ahead, you are now ready to make up a weekly schedule of your classes, study hours, and other obligations. A weekly schedule gives you a clear picture of what you are doing with your time. It helps you spot an extra hour or two during the day that you can use for studying or other activities. A schedule helps you plan more free time to do what you want. It decreases the amount of time you waste.

Follow these steps for effective scheduling:

1. Establish a well-defined and reasonable schedule.
2. Budget time to prepare for each class and all examinations.
3. Budget time to take care of personal responsibilities.
4. Plan to study course notes as soon as possible after each class period.
5. Give difficult subjects preferred times with the fewest possible interruptions and disturbances.
6. Reserve time for your family and leisure activities.
7. Stick to your schedule and reward yourself for achieving your study goals.

☆ WARNING: *Do not allow yourself to study too much.* Schedule time for the other things that you want to do and stick to your schedule.

☆ *Learn how to make yourself stop studying!* When you reach the scheduled time to stop, go get some exercise or do whatever you want to do. *Practice being a self-stopper!*

Yes, you read us right. For many students, the problem is not studying too little, they study so much they are inefficient.

C. Northcoat Parkinson observed that "work expands to fill available time." You may have experienced this phenomenon. Let's say that you had in mind cleaning up the house during three hours available on Saturday morning. If you have three hours available, it will probably take you three hours to get the job done.

But let's say that before you start to work you learn that a very special person is coming by to visit and will arrive in about 30 minutes. You would probably be able to clean the house reasonably well in fewer than 30 minutes. What we suggest is that you decide what has to be done, do it, and then stop.

Time management experts often say that things not worth doing are not worth doing well. With less important jobs or matters don't waste precious time doing them as well as you can. Do them fast and quickly, just good enough to get by. Use your precious time for more important things.

*The main thing to accomplish is to control your activities rather than letting your activities control you!*

A weekly time schedule that lets you fill in every half hour of the day, from early morning until late at night, will show you that you have many more hours each week than you might have ever realized. If you don't wish to purchase a printed weekly calendar, you can cut out the one at the back of the book and copy it. (Note: It will help your family if you post a copy where they can see it.)

**Make Daily "To Do" Lists**

Take a few minutes each evening to list the important things that you have to do the next day. List those things most important to be done, then plan ahead. Here's what one student reported doing:

> On a daily scale, I prepare myself by getting my book bag ready to go out the door the night before. I make sure I have paper, pens, books, calculator—everything I will need for the next day's classes. This saves much searching time and also reduces stress the next morning. Along with all the supplies I *will* need, I make sure there is nothing in my bag that I *won't* need.This includes extra books, note pads, tennis shoes, a broken door handle—anything just along for the ride.

Your "to do" list gives you a good frame of reference during the day. It reminds you what to do and what to say "no" to. It also lets you know when you are done.

Get in the habit of putting your time and energy into your highest priority items. Don't kid yourself that you will get to the really big project after you clean up all the little things. By the time you finish the little, unimportant tasks your time is gone and you are too tired to work on the important project. The same student quoted above says:

> To me the most important thing is *putting first things first*. A set study time is a priority. Once time is decided upon, decide what needs to be done and *do it*. One way I can remind myself of the importance of my commitments is to picture the result of my actions. I ask myself "How will watching TV instead of studying affect my future?" This puts things in perspective and reminds me of my priorities.

## The Big Picture

Every person who is both busy and effective makes decisions about what to do and what not to do with their time...

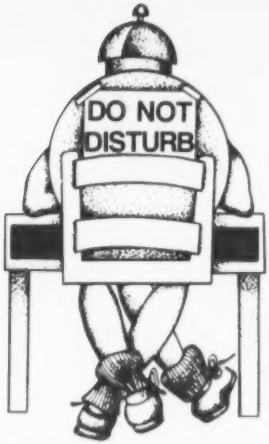
You started with your dream.
You decided that going to college was the way to reach your dream of a better life.
You confront your fears and concerns.
You select courses that lead to what you want out of college.
You imagine yourself succeeding in your courses.
You identify what you have to do to pass each course.
You develop monthly and weekly schedules for doing what it takes to complete course requirements.
You make "to do" lists that help you focus on your highest priority activities each day.
You stick with your daily schedule.
You balance being a self-starter with being a self-stopper.
You succeed in college while still having time for your family, your job, and other important activities.

## Action Review: Checklist for Time Management

- ❒ Do I have a calendar for the term marked with dates of all tests and assignments?
- ❒ Do I make weekly schedules of my classes and activities?
- ❒ Do I use daily "to do" lists?
- ❒ Can I do less important things quickly? Just good enough to get by?
- ❒ Do I set specific study goals for each course?
- ❒ Do I set up a schedule to achieve study goals?
- ❒ Do I stop studying when I said I would?

## Study Buddy Activity

Show each other your schedules. Talk about your ways of managing your time well. Discuss how it feels to do so many things by the clock. Discuss what it feels like to be both a self-starter and a self-stopper. Share one thing that you do to just "get by" yet feel good about.




*Chapter 9*

# The Best Way to Study

*Do you appreciate the value of asking good questions?*

*Do you know the most widely used and effective way to study?*

*Do you know that your studying time can be reduced by reading to answer questions?*

*Have you arranged a good study area for yourself?*

*Do you use principles of psychology on yourself when you study?*

## What Psychologists Know About Learning

Psychologists have studied how people learn for almost 100 years. You can use their research findings to improve your ability to learn and remember. Their research also helps show what interferes with learning and remembering.

Here are some important principles to understand:

- The weakest form of learning is *passive recognition*. Studying is not the same as reading your Sunday newspaper. Reading your textbook is not the same as reading a novel.
- The strongest form of learning is *active recall*. This learning method is to read the material with curiosity, intending to remember what you read, and then from memory write or verbally give a summary of what you learned. Passively reading your textbooks and lecture notes over and over again is no fun and is an inefficient way to learn.
- How well you first learn and then later recall what you study is influenced by your study environment, study plan, and learning style.

The purpose of any test is to measure what you have learned. This means that to pass tests you must start by learning the information you will be tested on!

Textbooks are not written to entertain you. When it comes to studying, you must use study techniques that motivate you to mentally reach out and grasp important information.

## Have You Had Trouble Learning?

Your past experience in school may not have been the most positive. Perhaps you couldn't spell your way out of a paper bag and this turned you off from writing assignments. Maybe you reverse numbers and still have trouble with phone numbers and your checkbook. You can understand if you are told instuctions, but not if you read them—or vice versa. You may have had a learning disability and never known it.

Figures for school children diagnosed with learning disabilities show a more than 250% increase since 1975. When you last

went to school, learning disabilities may not have received adequate attention. If you suspect you have this type of condition, and would like to have an assessment, contact your counseling office or office for disabled students. There is help for you.

Remember, learning disability has nothing to do with intelligence. Einstein, Leonardo Da Vinci, Thomas Edison, Cher, and Tom Cruise are all known to have learning disabilities.

## Asking and Answering Questions: The Key to Efficient Learning and Success in Classes

Let's look at a simple and highly effective learning technique. Thousands of students using this technique find that once they learn to ask and answer questions when they study they become highly successful in school. They save hundreds of hours studying, have more time to spend with their families, hold jobs, take trips, attend concerts, and lead a balanced life.

Learning this study technique will take some effort. You may have to change many of your old habits. Such changes are sometimes difficult. In the long run, however, the benefit is worth the effort so stick with it.

### Increase Your Reading Speed and Comprehension in Textbooks Using the SQ3R Method

The fastest way to spend less time reading assignments is to figure out the important questions and answers as quickly as possible. The following steps will increase your learning speed, comprehension, and memory. Here is how to do it:

Skim—Question—Read—Recite—Review = SQ3R

Experts on study skills have found that the SQ3R method is the most efficient and effective way to learn the most in the least amount of time.

### Skim and Question

The purpose of skimming through a chapter is to determine what important questions are answered in the textbook chapter.

**First**, look at the beginning of the chapter to see whether or not there are chapter objectives or a list of questions. Read them.

**Second**, look at the end of the chapter to see if there is a chapter summary. If so, read it right away! This is where you will find the important points that authors wish to stress.

☆ When reading textbooks you decrease your study time by reading the summary at the end of the chapter before reading the chapter!

**Third**, skim through the chapter quickly. How do you skim a chapter? Glance through the chapter rapidly. You want a picture of the forest before you examine any trees. Look for titles, subtitles, illustrations, pictures, charts, highlighted words or phrases, and questions that will give you a basic idea of what the chapter is about.

**Fourth**, turn titles, subtitles, and highlighted terms into questions while you skim. For instance, "Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs" is a section heading in a psychology textbook. When you see such a heading ask yourself "What is the hierarchy of needs that Maslow described?"

By asking questions as you skim, you keep yourself alert to the important points in the chapter. Reading in this manner is active rather than passive. As you skim, try to ask questions that, when answered, will give you a good grasp of the material and a summary of the chapter.

What does a good question look like? It usually starts with a phrase like:

Name three kinds of...
_____ is an example of what?
Describe the ways that...
List the important points about...
The pioneering research was done by...
The early research proved...
What does _____ mean?
The definition of _____ is...
The three stages of development are...

### Read to Answer Questions

It is now time to read. Read as quickly as you can. Read to find the answers to questions you asked while skimming the chapter.

☆ In many instances, your questions and answers will be in titles, subtitles, or lead sentences and chapter summaries.

When reading to answer questions, read selectively. Read to find answers to questions. As you read, when you come to the answer to a question that you had not predicted, slow down, ask the new question, and make sure you know the answer. When you come to material you already know, skip over it.

### Recite Answers and Summaries

After you read the chapter to answer your questions, close the book. Write a short summary of what you have just read. You learn best when you both write your summary and recite it out loud from memory. The more sensory systems and muscles you involve in your learning the faster and more long lasting your learning will be. Talking to yourself shows you are study-smart!

Many students start a new chapter before proving to themselves that they learned the contents of the chapter they just read. They think, "I read it, I underlined it, I know what it's about." *Don't make that mistake!* Prove to yourself that you comprehend the chapter by answering questions out loud and writing chapter summaries.

☆ Underlining or using a yellow highlighter will not lead to remembering nearly as well as writing or reciting what you know!

### Make a List of Terms and Concepts

The fastest way to master a new subject is to learn what the terms and concepts mean. To accomplish this quickly, make a list of words, terms, principles, and concepts that you will be expected to define, explain, describe, or understand.

Many students find that 3 x 5 cards are useful. You write the

term, concept, or principle on one side of the card. On the reverse side you write out the definition or explanation. Then, when it is time to recite and review what you know, you look at the card and try to state or write from memory the definition written out on the other side.

Using 3 x 5 cards is handy because you can carry them around with you instead of your textbook. When you have a few minutes after lunch, on the bus, or while waiting for a class to start you can use the time to review your knowledge of definitions.

☆ You do not need long blocks of time to study. You can study for a few minutes any time, any place!

### Review

If you have followed the steps so far, you are in excellent shape to review what you've learned at any time. And, as you will see in the next chapter, you are also prepared to write practice questions. The SQ3R method is simple, it saves time, and it works!

### The Benefits

A major benefit from using SQ3R is that you study for a limited time and then stop with a feeling of confidence that you know the material! You spend less time rereading chapters and doing other time-consuming study activities. This study method gives you the feeling that you've mastered the material. When you know you can answer questions correctly and make accurate summaries, you feel confident. Here is what one student wrote on an evaluation at the end of a course:

> When I read this chapter I thought "Oh, come on! It can't be that simple." But yes, Virginia, it is that simple. What a difference it has made! I was taking an economics course and getting nowhere...I started studying the SQ3R way and was amazed at how much I retained. I've also found that the method of writing questions during lectures works well. It gives me a good idea of what is likely to show up on tests.

### Some Difficulties of SQ3R

It can be difficult to change old reading habits. You may be used to reading every word, afraid that you're going to miss something. A new technique such as the SQ3R method may appear reckless because you learn so fast. It takes more energy to ask questions and write summaries than it does to passively read printed pages. You have to space your studying across many weeks.

### Athletes Practice

The SQ3R method is similar to the way that athletes prepare for competition. Imagine yourself agreeing to run in a ten kilometer race several months from now. You will run with friends and it is important for all of you to do well. To be at your best, would you loaf around until the last few days and then prepare by running day and night until the time of the race? No. You'd start now with a weekly schedule of jogging and running. A little bit of practice on a regular basis prepares you the best. The same approach is true for effective studying and remembering.

Try the study techniques, and after time expect the following results:

- The quality of your questions and answers will improve with practice.
- The amount of time it takes you to ask questions and write good summaries will decrease.
- You will be able to cover large amounts of material in far less time.
- You will find that you think up the same questions that your instructors ask.
- Your study periods will be shorter and you will feel comfortable stopping when your study goals have been reached.

## Your Study Area

The environment where you study affects how well you learn. Here are some tips about what to do and not do:

**Study in the same place** at home and at school. Don't keep changing your studying locations. New places distract you.

**Create a study area** for yourself at home. Do what you can to make it the place where your attention is devoted entirely to your studying. If you study at a desk, keep it cleared off.

**Use a comfortable chair.** It will be a good investment to get a comfortable chair that adjusts for height and back support. Discomfort can lead to muscle strain and physical distractions.

**Arrange good lighting**. To reduce eye strain, your room should be well lit, with the main light source off to one side. A light directly behind or in front of you will be reflected from the glossy pages of your textbooks. A constant glare tires your eyes more quickly than indirect lighting. If you can't shift the lamp, shift your desk. Place the desk so that no portion of the bulb shines directly into your eyes.

If you wear glasses, consider having them tinted slightly. Older eyes are vulnerable to eye strain.

> I loved my study area. My kids kept giving me posters to hang on the wall, and soon I felt that my corner was like the typical student's study area. Over my desk was my favorite Tom Sellek *Magnum PI* poster with Tom standing on the beach wearing shorts. Tom and I spent a lot of hours together, and I can still visualize that poster.—MK

## Mask Auditory Distractions

Use steady background sounds to mask distracting noises. Play your radio or stereo *softly* while you study to create a steady background of "white noise" to mask occasional sounds. Experiment with stations or records until you find what works best for you. FM radio stations playing instrumental music are usually best.

☆ Don't try to study with the television on.

If you want to watch a TV program, then watch it. But don't try to avoid feeling guilty about watching television by having

your book open to read during commercials. Studying with the TV set on is *academic suicide*. Use television time as a reward after you have completed a study period, if you wish.

## Work With Your Concentration Span

Have you ever sat reading for awhile and then suddenly realized you didn't know what you just read? Discovered that your mind wasn't paying attention to what your eyes were reading? This is not an uncommon experience for students.

The problem is that while you can make yourself sit and read hour after hour, your mind will take a break when it needs one. You are human. The length of time you can make your mind concentrate on a subject is limited even if you can make your body sit at a desk for hours.

The way to make your study time more productive is to start with what you can do now and build on that. On the average, how long can you study before your mind slips off to something else? Twenty-five minutes? Ten minutes? Most students can concentrate on a textbook 10 to 15 minutes before starting to daydream.

### Record Your Study Time Segments

The next time you study, write down the time you start. Record how long you read textbook material before your mind starts to daydream. Don't set any particular goals for yourself yet. First, you have to find out the typical amount of time you spend reading textbook materials before your mind starts wandering.

Let's say that you find your average concentration span is about 12 minutes. Accept that as your current level. Don't be bothered or upset thinking that you can't control your mind. Focus instead on increasing your concentration span in small, reasonable amounts.

### Take Mandatory Breaks

Once you determine your concentration span, set up a study schedule that fits your current ability. Take a brief break after each study segment and a long break about once an hour.

You will probably find the end of a study segment coming so quickly you will be tempted to continue. *Don't continue without your break!* Keep your agreement with yourself. If you decide to take a short break after each 15 minute segment, then do so. *Do not allow yourself to study more than the allotted time.*

When you promise your mind a break after 15 minutes, keep your word! No matter how much you want to keep on, make yourself take a short break. Get up and stretch. Get a drink of water or step outside for a breath of fresh air or a hug from a loved one before starting the next study segment.

## Mix Study Subjects

Here are more principles of learning:

- When you learn one set of facts and then follow it with similar facts or material, the second set will interfere with your memory of the first and the first will interfere with your memory of the second.
- When you try to learn lots of information at one time you remember the first items and the last items best. The middle is most difficult to recall.

When Steve came into the learning center he was tired and discouraged. He worked full time, was enrolled in three night courses, and studied many hours evenings and weekends. As hard as he studied, however, he found it difficult to remember the material the way he felt he should.

Did Steve have a memory problem? No. His problem was that he would study one subject all evening or all morning and then switch to another subject the next day.

The more you try to learn similar material at one time, the worse your recall will be. How can you avoid this problem when you have lots of material to study? The best way is to mix your study hours with dissimilar material.

☆ Do not devote one long study period to one subject.

Switch subjects about once an hour. Always try to make your new subject as different as possible from the subject you

have just finished. That way your mind can be assimilating one topic while you are reading about another.

## Principles of Learning in Action

Here is an example of a study schedule using the principles described above:

15 min.—history
1 min. stretch break
15 min.—history
1 min. stretch break
15 min.—history
10 min. break— drink some water, walk the dog
15 min.—math
1 min. stretch break
15 min.—math
1 min. stretch break
15 min.—math
10 min. break—drink fruit juice, make short phone call
15 min.—English
1 min. stretch break
15 min.—English
1 min. stretch break
15 min. English
All done! Reward—watch video tape of Bill Cosby show.

Now that you know how to use the principles of learning to study efficiently and effectively, the next chapter will cover how to prepare for tests.

## Action Review: Checklist for Successful Studying

Use the following to rate how well you are doing at studying and implementing the learning strategies we have described.

❒ Do I use the SQ3R method for learning course material?

❒ Do I skim chapters first, ask questions, read the summaries, and then read to answer questions?

- ❒ Do I practice writing answers to questions and write chapter summaries?
- ❒ Do I make up lists of terms and concepts to use when I test my ability to recite definitions from memory?
- ❒ Have I created a good study area for myself?
- ❒ Do I study in short time periods and take breaks?
- ❒ Do I switch study subjects often?
- ❒ Do I reward myself when I have successfully accomplished my study goals?

☆ Make a note to redo this exercise every three weeks to check your progress.

## Study Buddy Activity

Talk with each other about your SQ3R study results. Find out what your study areas at home are like. Talk about how you handle distractions. Compliment each other for efforts and progress. Talk about one new thing you learned and are excited about. Ask each other questions about the subject.

*Chapter 10*

# How to Get High Grades on Tests

*Do you know successful students make and take practice tests?*

*Do you know you can reduce nervousness if you feel free to write comments on tests about test items?*

*Do you know you can ask instructors about test items during the examination?*

## How to Guarantee Your Success on Tests

Have you ever taken an exam that didn't require you to answer questions? Of course not. Your grades are determined by your ability to answer questions, not your pleasant personality!

To do well in college, you have to be able to answer questions asked by your instructors. That's why we emphasize that every time you read your course notes or texts, you should look for potential exam questions.

If you want to do well on your exams, spend your study time developing exam questions from notes and texts. Then test yourself to see whether you can pass the test items you created.

Few students prepare for exams by taking practice tests. Most students prepare for exams by reading, underlining, and rereading their lecture notes and texts. But no instructor conducts an exam by asking you to read your notes or textbook to him or her. Your instructors ask you to answer questions based on their lecture notes, readings, and the textbook. The point is obvious:

☆ If you want to do well on tests, always study as though you're practicing to take a test.

## Make and Take Practice Tests

Pretend you are teaching the course. Make up exams just like the exams you believe your instructors will give. Just as orchestras rehearse for concerts and football teams play practice games, prepare for exams by taking exams.

Practicing the same kind of test items you will be required to answer in a test situation helps you relax. It builds your confidence. You feel less tension about tests. You know you have studied the right questions, and you sleep better knowing you've studied correctly.

## How to Predict Exam Questions

What kinds of questions should you ask? Questions just like the questions your instructor will ask on exams. Successful stu-

dents, as noted earlier, begin a course by asking *when* tests will be given and *what kind* they will be.

Will the test be multiple-choice? True-false? Short or long essay? A combination of these? Write your practice tests using the same kinds of questions.

You have read in previous chapters that the best way to study textbooks and lecture notes is to view the material as being answers to questions. There are other sources of exam questions as well. They include: old exams that may be on file in the library, instructors, classmates, discussion groups, and student manuals.

### Old Exams

Don't feel guilty about looking over past exams. Looking at old exams tells you what an instructor thinks is important information for which students should be responsible.

Looking at old exams doesn't guarantee that you'll know exactly what your exam questions will be. Exams change from semester to semester because instructors change their lectures, textbooks, films, approaches, and even their viewpoints. Nevertheless, by looking at old exams you may find out:

1. Does the instructor have some favorite questions that he or she asks every year?
2. Do test questions appear to be taken from material similar to what I am studying?
3. Do test questions come primarily from lecture notes, the text, or from a variety of sources?
4. What types of questions does the instructor prefer: multiple-choice, short-answer, true-false, essay?

### Student Manuals

Student manuals that accompany many textbooks are excellent sources of exam questions. Student manuals contain true-false, multiple-choice, fill-in, and short essay questions. Even if your exam will be made up of questions that differ in style, the manual questions are still valuable.

☆ Note: *The publisher of your textbook may have a student manual available even if the instructor did not require its use.* Check this out—especially for introductory textbooks. If a student manual exists, you can purchase it through the bookstore or directly from the publisher. It can be worth it's weight in gold!

### Discussion Groups

Some of the best sources of test questions can be fellow students. By talking with other students enrolled in the course or with students who have been enrolled in past semesters, you can get an excellent perspective on the types of questions and answers you should be looking for.

### Instructors

Your instructor can be a good source of information about test questions. Many students find it difficult to ask instructors what they believe is important. As we said earlier, most instructors are happy to tell you what questions they think are important. Some instructors will even let you look at old tests. It won't hurt to ask!

## Create a File of Practice Tests

Write out your practice questions on sheets of paper separate from your lecture notes. If you use 3x5 cards, place your questions on one side and your answers on the other.

This system will allow you to quiz yourself quickly. You look at your questions, provide written or oral answers, and then check to see how well your quiz answers compare to your original answers.

Most students like this system because it gives them a central filing system of questions and answers. Rather than fumbling through lecture notes and textbooks, they go to their notebooks of questions and answers or their stacks of question cards and quiz themselves. You could even show these to your instructor and get a view on how good your questions are.

## How to Quiz Yourself

Here is how to make and take practice tests:

1. Determine the length of the exam. Will it be a short, 20-item, true-false quiz? A 60-item multiple-choice test? A one-hour essay test?
2. Arrange the questions you've been accumulating from chapters, lecture notes, study groups, old exams, and other sources into practice tests.
3. Take your practice tests under conditions as similar as possible to those under which you'll be tested. The classroom in which you'll be tested is a good place.
4. Answer your questions without referring to your books or other sources of information.
5. If you are not sure of the answer to an item, try to guess. Make up answers as if you were in a real testing situation, trying to earn at least partial credit.
6. After you complete your practice test, compare your answers with those that you have in your own set of questions and answers.
7. After noting the questions you have answered well and those in need of improvement, revise your test.

Another way to take practice tests is to have a friend or family member quiz you. Later, when you feel ready, get together with several classmates and quiz each other.

Do you have to drive a distance to get to the college? Here's how one student takes advantage of the time in her car:

> Besides doing 3x5 cards I record the questions on cassette tapes. I do a lot of driving. I play the tapes while I'm in the car. Hearing a question and saying the answer out loud helps. When I record the tapes I put on enough questions to make up about 15 minutes. Then I record about 15 minutes of music, changing back and forth between the two. For me the best music has a lively beat and no words, Bolero, Angel's Crossing etc.

## Weekly and Final Practice Tests

If you take weekly practice tests in each subject area, you'll find that exam panic and last minute cramming are a thing of the past. Taking weekly tests allows you to master small amounts of information each week and then to put everything together in a final practice test just before you take the real thing.

Before each scheduled test, take a comprehensive practice test made up of sample questions from your weekly tests. You'll be pleasantly surprised at how much easier it is to pass your final practice test when you have been taking weekly tests.

☆ Remember: To reduce test anxiety, keep taking practice tests!

## The Advantages of Practice Tests

SQ3R may appear to be time consuming, but it isn't. Predicting exam questions is the most useful technique you can use for learning the important concepts covered in your courses. Students who collect test questions and answers, take weekly practice tests and take final practice tests spend far less time on irrelevant and wasteful studying. These students practice exactly what their instructors will require of them, asking and answering questions.

Such students also obtain a more solid education. They remember what they have learned much better than students who cram for exams. The research into forgetting shows that people quickly forget most of what they learn unless they review and rehearse the material.

These study methods help you pass tests well and obtain an excellent education. Your success in life, after all, is a matter of what you know and what you can do, not of your grades. When you go to an attorney to have a contract drawn up, do you ask "What grade did you receive in contract law?" If you have a pulled muscle, do you ask the physical therapist about his or her scores on anatomy tests? No. You seek help or services on the basis of what people know and can do.

Some instructors will use test questions you write—especially well-written multiple choice or true-false items. It never hurts to ask the instructor if he or she would like to see questions you've written. Be sure to include chapter and page references, and mark the correct alternative. What a boost to sit down to a test and see *your* questions on it!—MK

## Taking Your Instructors' Tests

Now that you know how to prepare for a test, let's make sure that you know how to relax and use your time wisely once you have the real test in your hands.

### General Guidelines

1. Read the instructions to determine the types of questions you'll be expected to answer. Determine where you'll earn the most points. Form a basic idea of how the test is set up, and decide what you will do.
2. Plan your time to ensure that you will get to all parts of the test. Do not devote too much time to the difficult parts and then panic when you find that you can't complete the whole test.
3. Before starting, determine whether or not answering the easier questions will earn you just as many points as answering the more difficult questions. If so, complete the easy questions first. After answering them you'll have more confidence, and you will be able to pass on to the more difficult questions.
4. Make sure you understand what each question is asking. If the directions say, "Give several examples of...," then do exactly that! *Give instructors exactly what they ask for.*
5. If you don't understand a question or find it extremely difficult, place an X by it, and move on to easier questions. You can come back later. This procedure saves time and prevents anxiety. Most important, you may find the answer hidden in other questions as you move through the test. Expect the

answer to come to you as you work on other items, just as you do when trying to recall a person's name. Relaxing and expecting the answer to come to you in a few moments works better than struggling to remember.

## Recognition Tests

There are two kinds of tests, tests that require you to *recognize* the right answer and tests that require you to *recall* the right answer from memory and write it down. Multiple-choice, true-false, and matching items are tests of recognition.

☆ Tip: Many tests are given by using a scantron card for the answers. This makes grading the test easier but if you are in a hurry or under stress, it is easy to get on the wrong number for the answer. To avoid this problem use a ruler or straight edge of another paper to line your marked answers and check your number from time to time.

Read recognition questions carefully, but answer them quickly. If the answer is not immediately obvious to you, put a mark by the item and come back to it later. Other items in a test often give clues to the answers in earlier items. Never leave a question unanswered, unless there is a penalty for guessing.

Contrary to the popular advice about never changing answers, it can be to your advantage to *change answers*. Research shows that when students have prepared well for an examination, the number of students who gain by changing answers is significantly greater than the number of students who lose by changing answers. Be careful about changing answers, of course. But your second thought, if you have prepared well, has a good chance of being correct. After the tests are handed back, check to see how many times answers you changed were right.

**Multiple-Choice Questions.** When you answer a multiple-choice question, eliminate the obviously incorrect answers first. You will save time and increase your chance of choosing the correct answer.

Read and answer each question quickly. Pay attention to key words and phrases such as "Which is *not*..." or "*According to* Skinner..." or "The *strongest* evidence..." After you have answered all questions, go back to see if you read them correctly. Finish by going back to those that you marked with X the first time through because you were unsure of the answers. Be alert to questions that say "always, never, or only." There are few absolutes in life or on tests.

**Matching Questions.** Check to make sure you have read the directions for matching questions carefully. Sometimes students believe that matches are so obvious that they do exactly the opposite of what is asked. If the instructions say, "Match those that are different" or "Match those that are opposite," you'll feel rather foolish if you have spent a lot of time matching those that are similar.

Answer the easy ones first. This tactic reduces the chance of guessing incorrectly on more difficult matches.

**True-False Questions.** Do not waste a lot of time pondering true-false questions. Some students waste major portions of test periods when they attempt to analyze true-false questions as if they were intricate puzzles. If an answer isn't immediately apparent, simply move on to the next question. One or two questions aren't worth that many points. Besides, the answer may become apparent later in the test as you answer other items.

## Recall Tests

There are three types of tests of recall: long essays, short written answers, and fill-in items. Long essay examinations ask you to "Trace the development of..." At most schools an essay examination will require you to write from five to ten essays.

☆ Note: If an instructor says it is a *blue book* examination, you must purchase and bring to class a small book with a blue paper cover. It is designed specifically for essay examinations.

**Long Essay Questions.** Outline your answer to an essay question before writing it.This will ensure that you include key ideas for which you will earn points from the grader. Remember, the purpose of the essay is to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding. A well-written essay answer usually includes the following:

1. **Introduction**. Begin with several paragraphs that ask the most important questions or present the main issues. It can help to pretend that you are writing a short article and need an interesting opening.
2. **Define terms**. Define what you mean when you use certain terms. Be sure to call attention to conflicting viewpoints or any uncertainties in your mind about the question asked. This approach often clarifies for the instructor why you have answered the question in a particular manner.
3. **Use subheadings.** As you write, be sure to use subheadings for longer answers. Subheadings show you and the reader the organization in your answer.
4. **Give examples.** Use examples to support your main points. You demonstrate that you really know what you are taking about when you present examples that support your position.
5. **Conclusions.** Summarize and draw conclusions. But note, *do not* include any new data, points, or examples in the conclusion! Add new questions, perhaps, but no new information.
6. **Edit for clarity.** After you have finished writing, pretend that you are the grader. Ask yourself, "Have I misread or misunderstood the questions? Did I leave anything out? Have I made any careless mistakes?" Allot time at the end to polish answers, refine points, and deal with more difficult questions that have puzzled you.

☆ Note: To get yourself started on an essay question, it can help to ask yourself what are the important social, historical, psychological, economic, or physical aspects of this question.

**Short-Answer Tests.** Short-answer tests may contain from 20 to 40 items usually worth from one to eight points each. Such tests may ask you to:

- Define each of the terms and concepts in a list.
- Outline an experiment or study.
- List the main points in favor of a procedure.
- Give three criticisms against...
- Draw and correctly label a chart or structure.
- Summarize the views of the author.
- Describe the main contributions leading up to...
- Name the basic steps or stages in a process.

Most of your answers on short-answer tests will be incomplete sentences and phrases. Long paragraphs are not what the instructor requested. Most instructors appreciate clear, legible, easily read lists of phrases. If you want to jot down some of the lists and other information you have memorized use the back of the exam.

## When Questions Puzzle You

What can you do when you come to a question that baffles you? Remember that in your reading you've probably read some information that is relevant. Put down *anything* and you'll probably earn a few points, which is more than you'll have if you leave the answer blank. While taking the exam, you're likely to recall or see some information related to the answer you need. If you can't figure out the exact answer, you can probably come close.

### You Can Write Comments About the Test

If, in spite of all your excellent preparation, you are still a bit nervous about the test, try imagining that the following statement is written across the top of the test: "Feel free to write comments about the test items."

Wilbert J. McKeachie, a psychologist known for his research on ways to improve teaching, discovered that when that statement was printed at the top of tests, many students did better.

An interesting result was that it did not matter whether students actually wrote anything about the test or not! The presence of the statement alone was enough to improve the scores of students who had fears of failing.

### You Can Ask Questions During the Exam

Instructors know that questions are not always clear. Sometimes a question is not worded well. That is why most instructors will answer questions about test questions during exams.

If there are one or two questions that just do not make sense, go ask the instructor. Ask "I don't remember this material being covered. Could you give me some help?" "Where was this information presented in the textbook?" "The way this item is worded, there are several possible answers, this one and this one. Which do you want?"

If you are drawing a blank anyway, you have nothing to lose by inquiring to see if the instructor will give you some hints. He or she will not give you the answer, but a comment such as "That item is from the chart at the end of Chapter 6" may give you the clue you need.

## The Advantages of These Test-Taking Methods

The methods described in this chapter can improve your confidence taking tests. Students who use these techniques get good grades on tests. They:

1. seldom misread the test questions or answer questions incorrectly.
2. do not waste time on questions that stump them.
3. do not answer questions with irrelevant information.
4. get more points on written items that let them "pad" their answers a little.
5. seldom develop exam panic.
6. rarely fail tests (they usually receive a B or better).
7. receive more points for answers than predicted.
8. feel more relaxed and confident while taking tests.
9. seldom leave out important information from answers.

10. are able to complete exams in the allotted time.
11. get higher grades in their courses.
12. know they are mastering the course material.

## One Final Tip

It is not necessary to play the suffering student game. Learning can be pleasant. Studying for exams can be efficient if you use the principles we've just discussed. If you prepare well for exams, then the night before each exam you can relax and do one more very helpful thing: *get a good night's sleep!*

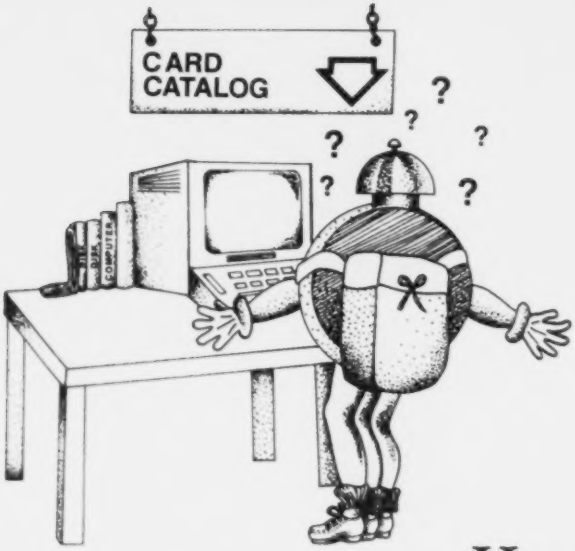
## Action Review: Checklist for Success in Preparing for and Taking Tests

- ❒ Do I practice quizzing myself on possible test questions?
- ❒ Do I make up and take practice tests?
- ❒ Do I practice taking tests under conditions as similar as possible to those under which I will be tested?
- ❒ When I take tests, do I use the techniques suggested in this chapter?

## Study Buddy Activity

Talk about taking tests. How do you feel on the way to the test? What do you say to yourself when you walk into the room and sit waiting for the tests to be passed out? What is your way of handling taking tests?

When you have taken several tests, show each other your test results. Talk about how well you handled yourself and what you could do better next time. Give your sample exams to each other. You will find out if you are on target or not. Your study buddies will tell you!




*Chapter 11*

# How to Write Excellent Papers

*Do you know your starting point when writing papers should be, "What questions am I trying to answer in this paper?"*

*Do you know the ability to write excellent papers may depend on how well you know how to use the library?*

*Do you know which librarian to talk to when you need help?*

*Do you know the difference between a barely acceptable paper and an excellent one is determined by your ability to revise and rewrite?*

## Writing Papers for Instructors

The successful way to write papers closely parallels the steps you take in preparing for tests. Begin by listing questions that might serve as a basis for an interesting paper.

When you approach writing from this perspective, the process is less difficult and less time consuming. More important, your papers are focused, accurate, and well liked by instructors. Here are the steps to follow:

### Pick Your Topic and Check with Your Instructor

Try to pick the topic that is both interesting for you and one that your instructor believes is important. If you listen closely in class, you will often detect an instructor's strongest interests. In selecting a topic, take your instructor's interests into account. Then go talk to your instructor. Ask for advice on how to proceed. Is your topic workable? Is it important? Are there problems to watch out for? Which issues are too simple and which are too complicated for you to tackle? Ask for a bibliography. Ask for suggestions on how to get started. If you ask good questions, your instructor's answers may provide you with a ready-made outline of your project.

### Remember Your Audience

Always keep in mind that you are writing to an audience of one, your instructor. You are not writing an article for *Reader's Digest* nor for your school paper. You are writing for your instructor. You need to demonstrate to *this* person what you understand about the assignment.

You have a better chance of doing well if you take time to find out exactly what you need to do to get a good evaluation. If your instructor is vague or unwilling to talk with you about what you plan for your paper, talk to students who have taken the course in the past. Try to read papers that other students have written for this instructor. That will give you an idea about how your instructor evaluates student work.

### Start With Questions

Ask yourself, "What important questions should I answer in the paper if I wish to cover the topic adequately?" Narrow your topic so that your research has a specific focus.

Begin your paper by indicating the specific questions you intend to deal with. Explain why these questions are important.

If you aren't certain how to start, go to the library. Find a reference librarian. They are wonderful people to know. They can help you find sources of information you probably wouldn't think of. They want to help you. That is what their job is. Make use of their expertise.

An excellent way to start a research project is to consult the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. If it covers the subject, this encyclopedia will often give a good introductory summary of it and the standard views concerning it.

Skim through the most recent books and journals that deal with your topic. Even new books can be several years behind the most current research, so it is wise to go to journals that are more up to date. By looking at what the experts are doing, you are likely to get a better idea of the important questions currently being investigated.

Once you have a list of good questions, start looking for answers. The best place to search is the library.

## How to Use Your Library Well

Libraries are wonderful places. They are one of the human race's most important memory banks. You can discover extraordinary ideas, even whole new worlds and facts about every conceivable subject. Do you know how to access this information? Do you know how libraries work?

### Microfiche and Computer Search Systems

In most college libraries your search for references will start with the microfiche system or a computer terminal. Microfiche is a catalog card system on microfilm. The film, usually 4 X 6 inches, has to be magnified for reading in a special scanner.

Many college libraries have an on-line computer system that records the daily availability of books and journals. If you are unsure how to use the microfiche or the computer terminals, ask a librarian for help.

### Beginning Your Library Search

Libraries index their books in three ways: by author, subject, and title. Which should you start with?

Let's say your paper is going to be about nutrition and athletic performance. You've heard about high protein diets and carbohydrate loading and seen ads for vitamin supplements. You've heard about professional athletes on vegetarian diets and seen athletes eating Wheaties. How do you find out what the facts are?

With your questions in mind, you'll probably want to start with the subject index.

Use your imagination when looking through the subject index. Look under every topic you can think of—nutrition, dieting, physical education, health science, and so on. Make notes of book titles and authors, and always write down the complete call number of the book. The *call number* is the library's code number that tells you exactly where the book is shelved.

> ☆ Note: When you see the statement "reserve" or "reserve desk" by a book, you will *not* find the book in the open shelves. An instructor has had the book placed in a special reserve section where it can be signed out for only several hours.

Another possibility is to ask the reference librarian to run a computer search on your topic. There may be a charge for a computer search, depending on the library. If your subject is well focused, the cost might run from $10 to $20. A computer search is very efficient and can save you hours of work.

### Periodical Index

The most up-to-date information, especially scientific reports on research, appears in professional journals long before it is re-

ported in books. Look for titles of journals that would contain articles related to your topic. For your paper you'd cover all the nutrition and physical education journals.

The journals of national professional groups are often titled *The American...* or *National Society of...* or *The Journal of the American...* So be sure to look under "American," "National," and "Journal" in the alphabetical listings. Listings for professional journals are under both subject and title.

As you write down call numbers for books and journals, you will begin to see a pattern. The books and journals with relevant information will be clustered in two or three places in the library. When you go to these sections, you will discover other books and journals that you didn't see in the catalog indexes.

Read first to get a general orientation. When you find useful data or passages you may want to quote in your paper, record your source and quote accurately. It can be very frustrating later when you can't remember which author you quoted or which statement is your own summary. Libraries have photocopiers available. You will save time using them.

From the journal articles you will learn about books to research. From the books you will learn about the journals that focus on your topic most frequently. In a book you may learn about an older journal article that is exactly what you need. You may discover, for example, that an article on blood sugar and endurance was published in a medical journal.

### Reference Section

You still haven't used your library well, however, if you ignore another source of useful information. It is the reference section. In the reference section you will find many resources, in addition to encyclopedias. Of most interest right now, however, is the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature.*

This index lists alphabetically, by subject and author, the titles of articles published in the major popular magazines. If an article on nutrition and athletic performance has appeared in *Business Week, American Health,* or *Runner's World,* the *Reader's Guide* will list it. Some scientific researchers publish directly in

popular publications so don't discount magazines as a source of information. Besides, the information is less technical than in professional journals and books. If you don't find the information you need in your library, a librarian can help you obtain what you want from other libraries through inter-library computer systems.

☆ Note: Libraries now often have video or audio tapes relating to many subjects. Do not neglect this possible resource either.

## Look for Answers

You'll soon discover that by having questions in mind that you want to answer, you can quickly cut through the massive amount of material that could otherwise distract you. By reading to answer your questions, you avoid the needless loss of hours wondering how much you should include in your paper.

## Expect New Questions

In the process of answering questions, new questions may arise. You may find that as you do your research you need to change the original questions in some way or add some new ones.

## Write Your Paper

Now that you've gathered your information, it is time to write the answers to your questions.

Write the answers to your questions as precisely as possible. Be brief. Don't include irrelevant information. Make your point and reinforce it with sufficient examples and data. Draw inferences and discuss the implications of the information. Answers to questions are more believable when they are precise and well documented.

Quote experts in the field. The more authoritative your examples, the better you will be able to convince your reader. Brief quotations, figures, and specific facts are more persuasive than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broad generalizations. Short quotations are more effective in supporting your points than lengthy quotations.

Give precise references for your information sources. A reader should be able to find the specific page of your source.

## Arrange Your Answers

Once you have written your answers, arrange them so that they build upon one another. Your next task is to connect them by saying, showing, explaining, or demonstrating how they are related to each other. These transitions from answer to answer should be brief but complete.

Then, when you have arranged your answers and connected them, write a summary of what you have covered. The summary explains what you have done in your paper and will provide you with your paper's overall focus or central idea. Now check your summary against how you began your paper. Do they match?

## The Steps So Far

1. Determine the questions you will answer in your paper.
2. Investigate how your library can help with information.
3. Outline the main idea of your paper and the questions you will answer.
4. Answer each question as precisely as possible. Provide examples to support your position.
5. Document your sources and list your references.
6. Put your answers in sequence so they build on each other.
7. Provide transitions from answer to answer.
8. Summarize what you have written and check the summary against what you described as the intent of the paper.

## Listen to Your Paper

Now it is time to read your paper out loud. When you read it aloud, a rough sentence structure or a passage that does not make sense can show up. Get a study buddy's reaction.

## Rewrite Your Paper

After you write your first draft, make an appointment to go over it with your instructor. Many instructors will give you good feedback about revising you may need to do.

The real writing of any paper takes place when you revise. Most writers produce several rough drafts before achieving their final version.

*Plan from the beginning to produce a rough draft which you will then revise into your final copy.* This approach lets you produce your first draft quickly and you won't waste time trying to edit, revise, and correct typing mistakes as you produce your first draft.

When you are ready to rewrite your paper, you should:

1. Make sure you have clearly indicated the questions your paper will answer.
2. Ask yourself if the questions you selected are important to the topic and cover it well.
3. Ask yourself if you have answered the questions effectively.
4. Ask yourself if you recognize what makes your writing interesting, not so interesting, confusing, or on track.
5. Correct any grammatical, punctuation, or spelling errors.
6. Refine any answers.
7. Decide how you want to conclude the paper. Consider including statements about what you learned in the process of writing the paper and why writing it was a valuable experience for you.
8. Ask your instructor to look over your rough draft.

Note: If you feel the need for guidance, contact the English department. English departments usually run a writing skills center for non-English majors. It is worth looking into.

## Caution: Never Plagiarize

Once in awhile, a student will copy passages from a book or magazine article and turn in the paper as his or her own work.

Trying to pass off someone else's work as your own is called *plagiarism*. It rarely succeeds. A paper written by a student attempting to learn a subject is not the same as material written by an expert. Most instructors can tell when writing is not a student's own.

It is human to consider taking shortcuts, but plagiarizing is not worth the risk. Plagiarism is unethical and usually illegal.

☆ It is also plagarism to turn in a paper written by another student. This means you don't let a study buddy copy your work, you don't copy theirs, and you don't do their work for them.

## Make Your Papers Look Good

If you want a good grade, make your paper look good. Type or word process all your papers. Instructors prefer printed, easy to read papers because of their constant struggle to avoid eye strain. If you don't have keyboard skills, consider taking a class. It is one of the best self-improvement efforts you can make.

Many English departments have their composition courses conducted as computer labs, so you might want to take an English composition course right away. It is a good way to develop computer literacy if you are not familiar with computers.

Make your paper as professional looking as possible. Most instructors will accept papers printed by dot matrix printers. Use clean white paper, double space the lines, and make a minimum number of hand-written corrections on the final copy.

Be sure to follow all directions your instructor gives for doing footnotes, references, and other procedures. It is a waste of time and energy to devote hours to a paper only to have it returned as incomplete. *The consequences of failing to follow directions can be costly.*

Make sure that your spelling and grammar are accurate. Use a spell checker or a dictionary when in doubt. Have someone else proofread your paper. Few things bother instructors more than poor spelling and bad grammar. Instructors tend to give higher grades to papers clearly typed, grammatically correct, and free of spelling errors.

*A word to the wise*: Hand in a paper you are proud of! If it were a business report that would affect your chances for a pay increase, would you submit it the same way?

☆ NOTE : *Always* make a copy of your paper. The original could get damaged or lost. Play it safe. Keep a copy and be sure it is saved on a computer disk.

## Action Review: Checklist for Success in Writing Papers and Using Your Library

- ❒ Do I write papers using the question and answer format?
- ❒ Have I asked the reference librarian for suggestions about where to look for information?
- ❒ Do I use the card catalog, microfiche, or on-line system to track down good reference sources?
- ❒ Do I get up-to-date information from professional journals?
- ❒ Are my quotes and references accurate?
- ❒ When my first draft is completed, do I ask the instructor to look it over and give me suggestions for improvement?
- ❒ Do I check for correct grammar and spelling?
- ❒ Am I proud of what I hand in?

## Study Buddy Activity

Talk about what you know about your college library. What tips do you have for each other about using the on-line system? If none of you know, then arrange for a demonstration by one of the librarians.

When you are developing ideas for papers, bounce topic ideas and key questions back and forth. Choose topics that interest you. It helps to be excited about your topic.

After you have produced your first rough draft, show it to the others. Read each other's papers out loud and ask questions. Take turns giving each other both suggestions and appreciation.

*Chapter 12*

# Learn About Your Learning Style

*Do you know that your studying and learning will be easier if you understand your learning style?*

*Do you know certain conflicts between students and instructors are predictable?*

*Do you know difficulties in school frequently stem from a mismatch between instructors' teaching styles and students' learning styles?*

*Do you know you may be handicapping yourself if you blame others when you have misunderstandings?*

## Learning Styles: They Can Help or Hinder

Researchers wanting to understand all aspects of success in college asked: "Why do some students do well with one instructor but not another?" Their research uncovered a simple truth about academic life:

- ☆ The way some people teach does not always match up with the way other people learn.

Other research looked at why students show wide differences in the time of day and the circumstances best for learning. This research identified an important truth about studying and learning:

- ☆ The learning circumstances best for one person may not be good for another.

Research findings and experience have identified the following important differences in how people learn.

### Auditory versus Visual Styles

Have you ever noticed that someone can read a note you've left them but the message doesn't get through to their brain? Or that you can tell a person something but it doesn't register unless you write it down for them? That's because people differ in how information gets into their conscious mind.

Some people learn best by listening. Information doesn't stick well unless they hear it. Other people learn best by reading. They must see something before they believe it and remember it. Some people learn best by doing. What is your natural style?

Do you remember best what is said to you or what you read?
Do you prefer television or newspapers as your source of news?
Would you rather hear an expert talk on a subject or read what the expert has written?
When you purchase new equipment do you read the instruction manual carefully or do you rarely read manuals?

Was reading the college catalog your main way of learning about your program and classes or did you merely skim the catalog and go see an advisor who told you everything you needed to know?

Based on your answers to these questions, which learning style do you prefer? Auditory or visual?

Everyone learns both ways, of course. It is not an either/or situation. Yet the differences between people are sometimes extreme enough to cause problems. If you have a visual learning style, you operate mainly on the basis of what you read. You may have difficulty with an instructor who believes that telling people what to learn and know is sufficient.

**Auditory Learning Style**

If you have an auditory style, you will probably do well with an instructor who says everything to learn and do. You may have difficulty with a visually-oriented instructor. Such an instructor hands out a written statement about what to do to pass the course without discussing it, and assigns textbook material and outside readings that are never discussed in class.

The solution, if you have an auditory style in a class taught by a visually-oriented instructor is to:

1. Find classmates who will tell you what they learned from the textbook readings.
2. Dictate the main points from the reading assignments and handouts onto cassette tape and then listen to the tapes.
3. Consciously work at improving your ability to acquire information visually. (Note: For professional help, go to the reading improvement center or the office of disabilities.)

**Visual Learning Style**

If you learn best visually, you may be in trouble with an instructor who doesn't use handouts, emphasizes class discussion, and doesn't write much on the blackboard. The solution with a verbally oriented instructor is to:

1. Take good notes on what the instructor and your classmates say. After class fill in sentences and compare notes with other students.
2. Ask the instructor for suggested articles or books that will let you read the information you need to understand better.
3. Consciously work at listening and remembering what the instructor says. TIP: One woman wrote to us saying that she types her lecture notes immediately after every class.
4. If you are confused about a point, ask the instructor to tell you again and write down what you hear.

## External versus Internal Learning Styles

Psychologists have done extensive research on a significant personality variable. It is called the "external and internal locus of control."

Externally oriented students believe information when it comes from an authority or expert. Information or suggestions from other sources aren't trusted as accurate.

If you prefer to get the guidance from expert sources and your instructor enjoys being an expert, then you have a good match. The more you need an instructor who tells the class exactly what to learn, the better you will do with this type of instructor. If you need clear guidelines from instructors but take a course from someone who provides little direction, you may flounder. You may be sitting in class waiting for the instructor to tell you what the answer to a problem is, only to have him or her ask the class, "What do you think?" After the class talks for awhile, the instructor may refuse to say what the right answer is. He or she might say, "You may be right," or "There is some truth to that."

Some students react negatively to classes where the instructor encourages discussion and encourages students to develop their own views and answers. These students protest, "I didn't pay good money to sit and listen to a bunch of uninformed people express their opinions. I can get that in the coffee shop." This attitude is legitimate. It is also narrow minded.

The word *education* means to "draw out of." It does not mean "shovel into." A good education teaches you to think for yourself. It teaches you to ask good questions and then how to find the answers on your own. A good education does not give you a diploma for learning how to seek out an expert for any question you have. It teaches you how to both listen to authorities and come to your own conclusions.

Self-motivated, internally oriented students appreciate an instructor who allows them freedom to follow their own paths. Such students get upset with instructors who tell them exactly what they must learn, and in what way. For them, too much course structure is abrasive. They feel handicapped more than helped. Such reactions are legitimate and narrow minded.

In every field of study, certain basics must be mastered. There are basic terms and concepts that must be understood. There are some techniques fundamental to the mastery of the subject even though the reasons why may not be given.

#### Being Both Internal and External in Learning

Students who get the most out of school are able to follow the tightly-controlled steps used by some teachers and, at the same time, organize their own learning experiences when in a class taught by someone who gives few guidelines. Can you learn to do both?

## Differences in Temperament

Isabel Myers and her mother, Katheryn Briggs, developed a test to measure four dimensions of temperament identified by Carl Jung. Myers-Briggs type tests are probably the most popular personality tests in the country because many people benefit from seeing how differences in temperament explain misunderstandings between people.

This means that differences in *how* you and an instructor think are more important than differences in *what* you think. Here's how the four temperaments influence your learning style:

### Extroversion versus Introversion

Instructors and students vary widely in how friendly they want to be and how much emotional distance they need to have. A friendly, extroverted instructor enjoys after-class contact with students. He or she will ask students to coffee or out for pizza. If you are similarly friendly, you will have a great year.

If you are a more introverted person, however, you may suffer from too much personal attention and closeness. You would much rather have a quiet, tactful instructor who respects your need to be left alone. Such an instructor understands how embarrassing it is to be called on to talk in class or to be openly praised for getting a high score on an exam.

On the other hand, if you are an extroverted person with a more introverted instructor, you may find it puzzling to have him or her pulling away from you after class. After all, what are instructors for if not to be available for students? Yet your desire to be friendly may cause the instructor to stare at you and make excuses to get away. After that, you may feel avoided.

When it come to studying, the introverted person needs a private, quiet place where everyone stays away. The extroverted person likes to study in the kitchen, in a student lounge, or with classmates. Don't hesitate to tell friends, relatives, and classmates with temperaments different than yours what you need.

### Thinking versus Feeling

Descriptions of this dimension of temperment match up closely with left-brain/right-brain research findings. The left brain is where the speech center develops in most humans. The left brain is where you remember words, use logic, and think analytically. It gives you your ability to think rationally and unemotionally. The left brain thinks in a linear fashion. It is time oriented.

The right brain carries your memory for music. You think visually, emotionally, and irrationally in the right brain. It is the source of creativity and intuition. Right-brain thinking follows emotional logic. Using it, you can visualize and think in patterns jumping from one spot in a pattern to another without apparent logic or reason.

If you tend to be left-brained, you will be well matched to an instructor who gives you thorough, unemotional listings of facts, data, analytic explorations, hypotheses, logic, evidence, numbers, definition of terms, and rational conclusions.

If you tend to be left-brained and get an instructor who teaches in a right-brained way, you may find the course to be a bewildering experience. You may experience the instructor as weird, too emotional, disorganized, and a bit nutty.

If you tend to be right-brained with a left-brained teacher, the course will be painful for you. You'll feel like a thirsty person handed a glass of water only to find it is filled with sand.

☆ To resolve personality conflicts such as these avoid indulging in the attitude, "If only other people would change, my world would be a better place for me."

When you have a mismatch, you can try to find someone (perhaps even the instructor) who will translate the material into a form you understand better. More important, however, make an effort to gain more use of your other brain.

The situation may not be easy at first, but it does give you a chance to add another dimension to yourself. And isn't this why you're in school?

You do not have to give up your more natural and preferred way of thinking, feeling, and talking. What you can do is add more to what you already have. We'll get into more of this in the chapter on the survivor personality.

**Sensation versus Intuition**

Sensation oriented people like to be sensible. They are guided by experience. Intuitive people like fantasy. They are creative dreamers. According to David Keirsey and Marylin Bates, authors of *Please Understand Me*, differences on this dimension cause the widest gulf between people.

The sensation oriented student is practical, wanting facts and evidence. An intuitive instructor can fill the lecture hour with hypothetical explanations, theories, concepts, and a long list of views held by others.

A sensation oriented instructor gives practical instructions on what to do. An intuitive student wants to know what the underlying theories and concepts are, and asks "but what if?"

What to do about this sort of conflict? Stretch your understanding. Ask for what you need. Try to minimize the judging dimension of the next pair of traits.

**Judging versus Perceiving**

If you remember Archie Bunker from the television series *All in the Family*, you have seen an excellent example of the judging temperament. Such people make up their minds quickly. They judge others and situations as good or bad, right or wrong.

The perceiving style is to observe without judgment. Such people can watch world events, movies, and sports events without taking sides or having an opinion.

A judgmental style instructor believes the purpose for being in college is to work hard to become qualified for an occupation where hard work will get you ahead. The instructor works hard, expects the same from every student, and privately judges students as good ones or bad ones.

A perceiving instructor looks for ways to make learning fun, tries to minimize office work, and sees all students as learners. This instructor is frustrating for a judging style student who wants serious homework and wants to know how he or she compares to the other students.

## Practical Suggestions

What do you do when a teacher is less than ideal? Do you get distressed? Complain?

By now we hope you have realized that finding a really good match between yourself and an instructor does not happen all the time. In fact, if you are an experienced victim, then the college will provide you with many chances to be upset, complain to classmates, and criticize instructors you judge to be imperfect.

As an alternative to being a victim, we have the following suggestions:

1. Before registration ask around to find out about various instructors. If you have a choice between instructors, you'll know which one to choose.
2. Try to get as much out of every course as you can, regardless of who your instructor is or how much the teaching style does not fit your preferred learning style. Be open to try a new way of learning.
3. When you have a difficulty understanding what is happening in a course, make an appointment to talk with the instructor. Be prepared to ask for what you want.
4. If you still have problems, go to the office or center that teaches studying and reading skills. The specialists there can be very helpful.

**Learn to Appreciate Human Differences**

When you experience conflicts with others at school, at work, or in your family, question your attitudes about what other people should be like. If you experience an irritating difference, use that as an opportunity to learn more about human nature. You might as well, because you won't change other people by criticizing them!

We humans are all born with different temperaments and different ways of functioning in life. That is simply the way things work.

## Do You Know Where and When?

Several final suggestions: If you grew up in a large family you may study best in a noisy place with lots of people around. Experiment with locations to see what works best for you.

Time of day is another learning style difference. If you are a morning person get up and study for an hour before others get up. Leave chores for evening when your brain is disengaging. If you are an evening person go ahead and study until one or two in the morning.

*The better you know yourself, the more skillfully you will manage your learning style and the easier it will be to succeed in college!*

## Action Review: Identifying Differences Between Teaching and Learning Styles

- ❒ When I don't relate to the way an instructor teaches do I look to see if there is a conflict between my learning style and the instructor's teaching style?
- ❒ If any of the following are descriptive of me do I take steps to compensate for my natural style in classes with instructors with different styles?

  auditory—visual
  external direction—internal direction
  extroverted—introverted
  left brain (thinking)—right brain (feeling)
  sensible—intuitive
  judging—perceiving

- ❒ Have I examined my assumptions about instructors and developed a more realistic and tolerant attitude?

## Study Buddy Activity

Talk with each other about how conflicts between teaching styles and learning styles help explain difficulties you might have had with the way some instructors teach. Help each other develop a positive plan of action for handling future conflicts.

Discuss how the information in this chapter helps explain personality conflicts you've had at home or at work. Can you recognize any of your relatives in these descriptions? Any bosses or co-workers?

☆ Note: If you want to take a Myers-Briggs type assessment of temperaments, check with the counseling office or careers center. Many colleges have a software program that lets you take the test and get a printout of your scores.

*Chapter 13*

# How to Influence Instructors and Salvage Poor Grades

*Do you know you can improve the teaching you get?*

*Do you know that many students are unaware of the effects of their behavior on instructors?*

*Do you know it is possible to overcome a poor start in a course and get a good final grade?*

## How Students Affect Instructors

Have you ever had to work or live with someone who was insensitive to the negative affects their actions had on you? If so, have you ever wondered if you sometimes act in ways that have negative affects on others?

Did you know that college teaching can sometimes be disheartening? Teaching is not enjoyable when students are unmotivated, unresponsive, and poorly prepared.

College instructors, like all living creatures, are influenced by the way they are treated. Simply put: *Positive student actions usually lead to positive instructor actions. Negative student actions often lead to negative instructor actions.*

The following questions emphasize typical ways students upset instructors. As you go through the list ask yourself if you ever act this way with an instructor. And, if you were an instructor what effect would this behavior have on you?

### Do You Tell Irrelevant Personal Stories?

Adult students sometimes become so carried away with class discussions they get off into personal stories that have no relevence.

*Useful alternative:* Think about what you're going to say and why you're going to say it. Ask yourself "Will what I say be useful?"

### Do You Expect Instructors to Be Personal Counselors?

Instructors are not counselors. Unfortunately, some students expect too much. Some students expect instructors to be extremely interested in their life history and personal problems. Most instructors want to be friendly with students, but are not in a position to be personal counselors.

The difficulties arise when a student drops in frequently to talk, unload about personal problems, and cut into the instructor's rather tight schedule. Instructors often feel uncomfortable discouraging drop-ins. Few instructors want to be seen as uncaring or uninterested in their students. Instructors want the best for their students and are usually willing to try to help. It's unfair,

however, to ask them to spend their time solving your personal problems.

*Useful alternative*: Avoid asking instructors to do more than they are equipped to handle. If you need help with personal problems, see the professional counselors at your college or talk to your best friends.

**Do You Make Unreasonable Requests?**

There are students who will miss a month of classes, show up one day, and ask to borrow the instructor's lecture notes. Other students will ask to take the final exam several weeks early so they can leave for an early vacation.

*Useful alternative*: Most instructors are interested in your academic and personal well-being. Instructors understand that you may run into financial, transportation, health, family, and numerous problems which interfere with successful performance in class. Don't be afraid to let your instructor know when an event drastically alters your performance. If you are ill for two weeks with the flu, let your instructor know why you are missing class.

Handle minor problems yourself. If your car breaks down and you miss class, do not expect your instructor to repeat an entire lecture for you. Duplicate notes from one or two other students.

**Do You Get Angry At the Instructor When You Get a Bad Grade?**

Some students have the mistaken impression that the more an instructor likes them, the better the grade they will get. They are shocked, bewildered, and angry when they get a low grade from an instructor who is pleasant and friendly. They don't understand that the grade given is unrelated to how well they are liked.

*Useful alternative*: Appreciate that it is a sign of emotional maturity and professionalism for an instructor to be pleasant and supportive toward all students, even the ones not doing well in the course. It is a weak instructor who openly likes the better students and dislikes the poorer ones.

### Do You Act Unhappy When An Instructor Doesn't Teach Well?

All of us have days when we'd prefer to avoid contact with other people. Instructors cannot hide in a closet until a bad mood passes. Even when they are not at their best, they still have to show up.

*Useful alternative*: Show a little compassion. Don't expect the impossible. No one can be outstanding every day. If your instructor has an off day, do what you can to make the class a good one.

### Do You Complain to Other Students About a Poor Instructor, But Avoid Telling the Instructor?

It is easy to complain to other students about an instructor you don't like. The problem is, your complaints won't help your instructor teach better or your classmates learn more. Your complaints may result in other students responding negatively toward the instructor, which will then make things more difficult for everyone. Is that what you want? Why make things tough for your instructor, your fellow students, and yourself?

*Useful alternative*: Don't criticize your instructors to other students. Try to help instructors, not hurt them! Look for the good points in your instructors. Try to create a climate in which your instructors can do an even better job.

## How to Improve the Instruction You Get

### Give Feedback to Instructors

Instructors' actions can be influenced by the feedback they receive from students. When an instructor does things you consider to be good teaching, let the instructor know. Be attentive, nod, and smile. After class compliment them in person or with a short note. When you and the other students praise good teaching, you'll get more of what you like and less of what you don't like.

If your instructors request course evaluations, be sure to fill out the forms. Let your instructors know what you like! If you

want to tell an instructor there is something that needs to be improved, be sure to give specific examples of what you don't like and what you would like.

### Prepare Good Questions Before Going to Class

As you read your assignments for class, write down several questions to ask during the next lecture. Most instructors want students to ask good questions. When students sit back timidly, afraid to ask questions, instructors wonder whether or not the students understand what's going on.

### Practice Empathy

By taking the perspective of your instructor, you may appreciate how easily it is to become disheartened by students who aren't aware of what it's like to deal with insensitive students. Keep in mind that even the best instructors find it difficult to feel positive about a student who falls asleep in class!

## How to Turn a Bad Situation Around

So here you are, you totally blew the mid-term, got a D on your project and could end up with a D or F in the course. Is your situation hopeless? Not at all. You can often salvage a bad grade.

### Develop a Plan To Avoid Failing the Course

Make an appointment to talk with your instructor. *Go with a plan!* If you did poorly on the mid-term or even on the final, ask to take the make-up exam. Ask for a chance to make up work. Ask if you can write an extra paper or rewrite the project you threw together the night before it was due.

Explain why you wish to do better. Instructors are much more inclined to give students a chance when they admit they have done poorly and want to turn things around.

Ask for a chance to show that you do know the material. (Maybe you did not then but things have changed now.) Even if the instructor says you cannot take the test to change your grade, ask to take it anyway to see for yourself if you can do better.

Assuming that you will get a better score, this will have a psychological effect on the instructor later. Most instructors will give you a chance. A bad grade is not inevitable unless you allow it to be.

☆ WARNING: Do not just walk away from a class where you are doing poorly. Officially drop the class. A failing grade turned in at the end of the course becomes part of your permanent school record.

> One of my early learning experiences involved messing up on a mid-term exam. There was no make-up exam. I felt desperate. I wrote out three questions that could be used as the basis for writing long essays. Then I went to the instructor and asked if I could get extra credit for researching and answering one or more of the three questions. I said I would write my answers in the form of a paper using information from outside the textbook. I was delighted when he agreed to my request. I ended up with a B in the course. The results would have been different if I had not done the extra credit work.—MK

### Consider Taking an Incomplete

If you anticipate a bad grade in a course because you have not been able to get all of the work in, and you want to earn a good grade, then consider asking the instructor to submit an *incomplete* on the grade sheet. All colleges have policies for allowing students to complete course work after the course is over. At most colleges you have at least a year.

You can change the past if you want to. A sincere request for another chance, a specific plan about what you will do, and commitment to do it will influence most instructors.

## Instructors Are Human Too

You will have great instructors, average instructors, and some you believe are teaching only because they couldn't hold a job out in the real world. The point is that instructors are human beings who react just as you do to the way they are treated.

Would you be enthusiastic about teaching a class where students come to class late, eat food instead of taking notes, and whisper to each other? No. How students conduct themselves makes a difference. You can decide to act in ways that help your instructors be better instructors or you can choose to act in ways that cause instructors to become tired and unmotivated. You can influence the quality of the teaching you get.

## Action Project for Getting Better Teaching

1. Take some time with several classmates to develop a list of things that good teachers do. List specific, observable actions.
2. List all those things you might do that could be rewarding for an instructor.
3. Observe each instructor to see how much or how little of the desired teaching behaviors occur.
4. Compliment and reward instructors who do many of the things you list as good teaching. Be specific. Let instructors know what you appreciate. Remember: The more quickly you reward a desired behavior, the more effective your reward.
5. Observe how you react when a teacher is less than what you would like. Ask "Do I do any of the things that upset and frustrate teachers?"
6. Track positives. If an instructor is not the best in giving you good teaching, look for any small signs of improvement and immediately reinforce the improvement.
7. Ask yourself, "Am I a rewarding person to have in class?" If you aren't, then here is a chance to practice. There is a lot of wisdom in the old saying "An apple for the teacher!"

## Study Buddy Activity

Talk about some of your past experiences with good instructors and poor instructors. Talk about your teaching experiences as parents, supervisors or managers. How easy is it? What irritated you? What feedback and responses did you appreciate from people you tried to teach?

*Chapter 14*

# Thriving Under Pressure

*Do you know the difference between stress and strain?*

*Do you believe the way for your life to get better is for other people to change?*

*Did you know stress can be good for you?*

*Can you be both optimistic and pessimistic?*

*Do you know how to decrease your negative experiences and increase your positive experiences?*

## Misunderstandings About Stress

Stress has received a bad name in recent years. Many people think stress is bad. It isn't. *Too much* stress is bad for you, a certain amount of stress is necessary for health and well-being.

Before we look at a simple and practical way to handle the many pressures that can build up on a college student who is working, raising a family and handling other important responsibilities, let's clarify some misunderstandings about stress:

**1. Selye made a mistake.**

Much of the confusion and misunderstanding about stress traces back to Dr. Hans Selye, the physician who created the concept *biological stress* in 1936. In his memoirs, however, he apologized for using the wrong term. He explained that when he came from Europe to attend medical school he did not understand either the English language or physics very well. He said his research was about strain, not stress. He said he should have named his concept the *strain syndrome.*

**2. There is no stress in any situation until a person experiences strain.**

In physics a stressor is an external force attempting to deform an object. The affect on an object is measured as strain. Human beings differ so widely in their abilities to handle various situations, what is mildly challenging for one person is overwhelming for another.

**3. Many people blame the situation for their reaction to it.**

It is not unusual to hear people claim that they have stressful jobs, stresses at home, or stresses as college students. That is a misperception. They are confusing the situation with their reaction to it. It isn't the circumstance that counts, it is your reaction to it that counts. What is stressful for one person is not stressful for another. An instructor that one student complains about for being extremely tough is appreciated by another for setting high standards.

**4. A stressful situation can be beneficial.**

Selye coined the term *eustress* to emphasize that some stress is good for people. Athletes build up their physical strength with frequent workouts. Professional training programs build competence by straining people to their limits. Emotionally stressful experiences can motivate a person to learn new coping skills.

## Stress Resistant and Stress Prone Personalities

Two people in an identical situation will have different reactions to it. Erma Bombeck writes books about her amusing experiences raising a family. Other mothers are so distressed trying to raise their families they need tranquilizers, counseling, and emotional support.

The situation a person is in is not the problem. *It is how a person deals with a situation* that explains why some people become sick while others become strong in the same environment. Research findings show that:

Persons more likely to develop stress related illness

- experience many upsetting events in routine activities;
- feel vulnerable, helpless, and without choices;
- have limited internal and external resources to draw on;
- feel socially isolated, not accepted;
- have little capacity for self-change; and
- accumulate memories of negative experiences but few positive experiences.

Persons less likely to develop stress related illness

- experience few upsetting events in routine activities;
- feel capable of taking effective action about upsetting events;
- draw action choices from a wide range of inner and external resources;
- experience family and friends as caring and supportive;
- manage self-change well; and
- convert negative experiences into beneficial learning.

## Recognize the Signs of Too Much Pressure

Indicators of too much pressure include: sleepless nights, drinking alcohol to get to sleep, losing your temper over a minor incident, migraine headaches, frequent colds and illnesses, auto accidents, ulcers flaring up, high blood pressure and other cardiovascular problems, losing track of time, falling asleep in class, and forgetting to bring a paper you stayed up late to finish.

## How to Cope Effectively With Pressure

It is important to avoid feeling helpless and at the mercy of external forces. Here is a practical course of action for decreasing emotional strain and increasing revitalizing experiences.

### How to decrease negative and stressful experiences

1. Make a list of everything you experience as negative, upsetting, or stressful.

   Sometimes the only way to be more positive is let yourself be negative. When you make a list of everything you feel pressured about you are not a negative person, you are a practical person taking the first step toward coping well with many pressures. When you list all the forces working against you, you become better prepared to deal with them.

2. Discharge feelings, if necessary.

   It is not unusual to experience some physical and emotional upsets when you start college for the first time. Forgetfulness, stomach and intestinal problems, and sleeping difficulties are normal reactions to stress. These symptoms are usually temporary and should diminish quickly if you find outlets for your feelings.

3. Go through your list, item by item, asking questions:
   - Could I do something about this? How direct is my contact?
   - What if I ignored this or avoided contact?
   - Could I change the situation in some way? Who could help me?

- What if I changed my reaction to it?
- Why is this good for me?

The aim is to find ways to minimize the impact of the entire list. It isn't usually one big thing that does a person in, it is the accumulation of many little things. With this plan you diminish the effects of too many strains, avoid feeling helpless and hopeless, and increase feelings of emotional control.

> Although I'm a pretty relaxed person most of the time, I did learn to recognize when stress was building up. I finally figured out that from time to time I would develop this overwhelming urge to clean the house, which meant that I was feeling too much pressure. I knew that things were really bad when the urge to clean the house changed and became specific—*I wanted to clean the refrigerator!*—MK

**How to increase positive and revitalizing experiences.**

1. Make a list of things you experience as positive in your life. Ask yourself what activities make you feel happy and relaxed. What makes you feel good? Reflect on pleasant experiences.

2. Ask questions about how to repeat, increase, or have new positive experiences.
   - Am I ignoring or taking for granted some positive aspects?
   - What do I enjoy doing? What do I get enthusiastic about?
   - What would I like to do that I keep putting off?
   - With whom do I enjoy sharing good experiences?

3. Do a few things good for you to do.
   It is important to be self-nourishing even though it may look like selfishness. Psychologically healthy people are both unselfish and selfish. They act in ways that are good for their well-being while still being helpful to others.

The plan described here will decrease feelings of pressure while increasing revitalizing experiences. It is simple, effective plan. Now here are some things to consider doing for yourself:

## Revitalizing Activities

### Laugh and Play With Friends

Successful students do not study all the time. Do anything you can to prevent your college life from getting too serious, too burdensome, and too heavy.

Laughing and playing have many beneficial effects on your health. Make a conscious effort to get into activities where you can yell or laugh or play hard and completely forget your responsibilities at school and home. If you are not doing much of this now, take another look at the recreation facilities on campus.

### Physical Activity

Several times a week do anything that works your muscles. This might be bike riding, jogging, playing raquetball or tennis, swimming, or fast walking. It may be a yoga class. In any case, activities that increase your physical tiredness help you sleep and rest better.

### Listen to Good Music

Play some classical music while doing nothing else. Don't try to exercise good time management by also shining your shoes, writing letters, or cleaning out your desk. Sit back and totally lose yourself in the music. The word "music" stems from the activity of musing. So do it. Muse.

### Meditate or Take Naps

Research into meditation shows that it has many beneficial effects. Find a place where you can sit and do nothing for a few minutes each day. Don't use the the time to solve problems. Focus your attention on a beautiful scene. Recall one of your most enjoyable vacations. Take easy, relaxing breaths. Find out what it means to get centered.

Naps are a wonderful way to relax and revitalize yourself. If you have a car at school, try taking naps in your car. Take a short nap early in the evening instead of watching television before studying. Take naps on weekends if you wish.

## The Counseling Center Can Help

Most college students have periods of feeling lonely and depressed. If this happens to you, remember that such feelings are part of being human. School counselors can show you how to get through the unpleasant period while the natural emotional processes of self-healing are operating.

Emotional upsets are normal. You don't have to handle them alone. It is not a sign of strength to mask your feelings with drugs or put on a front of happiness. Emotional strength develops from feeling whatever you feel and talking to friends when things aren't working well. Get some help from your friends and other resources when things aren't so great.

Most counseling centers have useful books and cassette tapes on how to increase relaxation and reduce stress.

## Outcomes

First, stress resistance can be learned. An effective plan of action reduces negative, stressful experiences and increases positive, revitalizing experiences.

Second, by seeing that a stressful experience is a feeling of strain, you avoid feeling victimized. You can use strain like a workout. Just as bike riding, jogging, or swimming leads to getting physically stronger, using emotional strains as workouts leads you to becoming mentally and emotionally stronger.

## It Isn't the Situation

Martha Washington once observed:

> I am still determined to be cheerful and happy in whatever situation I may be, for I have also learned from experience that the greater part of our happiness or misery depends upon our dispositions and not upon our circumstances.

What is distressful for one person is not stressful for another. When you take steps to cope with pressures and negative experiences, the world you live in will have less stress and strain.

## Action Review

- ❒ I have listed all the things I experience as negative, distressing or upsetting.
- ❒ I have looked at each item on my list and developed plans for reducing, changing, avoiding, or minimizing them.
- ❒ I have listed what is positive and revitalizing for me.
- ❒ I have developed a plan for increasing pleasant, revitalizing experiences.
- ❒ I understand the feeling of distress is emotional strain and that strain can lead to getting stronger and better.

## Study Buddy Activity

Talk about the pressures you each feel. Ask each other "How do you manage?" Find out what you each do that is enjoyable, positive, and revitalizing.

Discuss your reactions to reading that an important step toward thriving under pressure is to list everything you feel negative about. Is it difficult to be negative? Easy?

Share how easy or difficult it is to engage in activities that may seem selfish. Discuss your feelings about how easy or difficult it is for you to act in selfish ways. How have people important to you reacted when you've acted in selfish ways?

*Chapter 15*

# Learning in the School of Life: The Survivor Personality

*Do you learn useful lessons from everyday experiences?*

*Do you know how to learn what no one can teach?*

*Do you know it is healthy to be paradoxical?*

*Do you understand how playfulness, intuition, humor, and creativity are related to being a survivor?*

## Gaining Strength From Adversity

You probably know several individuals who are good survivors. They handle major difficulties better than most people. They gain strength from adversity and find ways to turn misfortune into good luck. When hit by a major setback they don't react like victims. They don't complain about how unfair life is.

Terry Anderson, for example, was taken hostage in Lebanon and held for almost seven years. He was beaten, fed poorly, and ordered to not talk with other hostages. Did he become angry and bitter? No. During the press conference held the day after his release he was cheerful and in good humor about his ordeal. He described how he coped, how he developed a sign language that let him communicate with other hostages. He said the years he spent in captivity "weren't wasted." His sister said she could see that he was a better person than he was before.

## Two Response Patterns

How do you react to life's difficulties? Do you have a victim reaction or a survivor reaction? The victim reaction is to be crushed by the blow. The victim habit is to complain: "Ain't it awful." "Look what they've done to me now." And "If only my life had been different." People with victim patterns feel helpless. They blame others for their unhappiness.

Life's best survivors react to unfair and unexpected disruptions in ways that bring out new strengths. They have a learning/coping reaction. When hurt and distressed they expect to find a way to have things turn out well. They react to adversities as lessons to be learned in the school of life.

People with survivor personalities are resilient and durable. They get better with age. Like cats, they manage to land on their feet when the bottom drops out of their lives.

What makes a survivor? A combination of qualities every child has a natural tendency to develop. These include playful curiosity, intuition about people, an ability to learn from experience, and more. The best indicator of a survivor personality, however, is a talent for serendipity.

Before reading further about life's best survivors, look at the lists below. Check off the traits you possess. Add traits not listed in the spaces at the bottom.

- ❒ calm
- ❒ trusting
- ❒ strong
- ❒ serious
- ❒ lazy
- ❒ stingy
- ❒ curious
- ❒ self-confident
- ❒ pessimistic
- ❒ unselfish

_____

_____

- ❒ emotional
- ❒ cautious
- ❒ gentle
- ❒ playful
- ❒ hard-working
- ❒ generous
- ❒ indifferent
- ❒ self-critical
- ❒ optimistic
- ❒ selfish

_____

_____

## Curiosity

In any difficult situation, it is essential to quickly assess and understand what is happening. Being open to read, assess, and respond to new developments is a reflex in life's best survivors. It is a brain habit based on retaining, throughout one's life, a childlike curiosity.

Do you ask lots of questions? Wonder how things work? Wonder how and why other people do what they do?

This sort of curiosity gives a person a mind that can remain open to comprehend upsetting developments and bewildering situations. The people who survive life's difficulties the best are drawn to what is unusual, complicated, and mysterious. Thus, when unexpected difficulties develop, they can quickly absorb information about what is happening.

## Playfulness

Experts on human development know that to play is to learn. As an adult, the playful person is the life-long child who never grew up. Such a person plays or experiments with almost anything. They laugh at surprises and feel delight when something new is learned. Deciding to play and have fun as a reaction to adversity is not uncommon.

A woman with two young sons had some medical tests done. Her physician told her she had an advanced stage of cancer and had only few months to live, a year at most.

She sat outside in her car for awhile feeling shocked and distressed. But, as she drove home from the doctor's office, she composed herself. She decided that if she had only a year to live it would be the best year of her life. She stopped at a seafood market and purchased lobster tails for dinner. She made her family their favorite dessert.

In the weeks that followed she stopped doing the many things she used to do but didn't enjoy. She arranged to have happy, pleasant times with her boys and her husband every day.

The year passed and she didn't die. In fact the cancer went away. That was more than 20 years ago. Her sons are grown and married and she is now a proud grandmother.

## Humor Can Make the Difference

Laughing and joking during a crisis is practical. Laughing improves one's ability to solve problems and deal with situations. Alan Alda's irreverant humor as Hawkeye in the television series *M.A.S.H.* was an excellent example. He was serious about being a surgeon but not about being a soldier.

Why does humor help? Laughing reduces tension. Creative problem solving, accurate thinking, and good physical coordination are best in moderate emotional states. In sports such as basketball or baseball, for example, a moderate level of emotional arousal leads to better performance.

The humor is not hostile or hurtful. It is directed toward the situation. The person toys with the situation and pokes fun at it.

Chances for surviving are increased by the attitude, "I am bigger than this situation. This is my toy. I am going to play with it."

Humorous playing is a way of asking "How does this look from a different point of view? What would happen if I turned it upside down? What if the reverse were true? What unusual things exist here?" By playing and toying with the situation, the person avoids being overwhelmed and at the same time is likely to come up with a way to survive.

## Adaptability and Flexibility

Successful coping comes from being flexible and adaptable in thoughts, feelings, and actions. What makes flexibility possible? Paradoxical personality traits. They let you be both one way and the opposite, both pessimistic and optimistic, for example.

Can a person be both? Yes. Even though people often are thought of as one way or the other, as either pessimistic or optimistic, life's best survivors are people who refuse to limit themselves to what others can comprehend.

Look back at the checklist. If you looked at the lists and quickly decided "All of the above," that's an excellent sign. If you wrote down several pairs of paradoxical or contradictory qualities you've noticed about yourself that's a very good sign.

The list is not meant to be complete, but to make an important point. The more pairs of paradoxical traits you have, the more flexible you are at dealing with any situation that develops. Having opposing personality traits is like having a reverse gear in a car. It lets you back up when you need to.

Having paradoxical qualities such as optimistic pessimism, selfish unselfishness, and angry forgiveness is not without it's problems, however. Few people understand that the most mentally healthy people are "successfully schizy!"

On the other hand, people without counter-balanced or paradoxical pairs of traits are emotionally handicapped. They are rigid and inflexible because they were trained to be one-sided. They were taught to never be selfish, angry, negative, lazy, or self-appreciating. One-sided people are difficult to live and work with because they have an energy draining effect on

groups. They are so concerned about acting as they think they should, they will interfere with things working well.

## The Need to Have Things Working Well

The people who turn out to be life's best survivors need to have things run well. They have a synergistic effect wherever they are. They are good to have around. This is the person you hope will agree to help you handle a difficult situation.

The ability to cope well with emergencies and crises comes from needing and expecting things to work out all right. From the first moment of scanning a new and unexpected development, they expect to find a way to have things turn out well.

Needing to have things work well is a part of being constantly open to new and better ways of doing things. Old assumptions and beliefs may be changed or given up. When a better way of perceiving or doing things comes along, people who cope best adopt them easily.

This need for good synergy, the need to have things work well, is the inner, organizing frame of reference. Negative thinking about what could go wrong increases chances of getting a positive outcome. The ability to cope well is enhanced by having the inner freedom to act, think, and feel in both one way and the opposite. And the way a situation is handled is often creative.

## Practical Creativity

Research has established that a nonjudgmental or observing way of viewing the world is esential for creative thinking. A judgmental attitude is to quickly condemn or find something wrong at the first impression. As described in Chapter 12, judgmental thinking is to quickly view others as right or wrong, to view people as being good or bad.

To be creative is to come up with unusual ideas that work. By understanding the relationship between creativity and nonjudgmental thinking, the survivor pattern becomes more clear. Life's best survivors are complex. You are never quite sure what they are going to do in a situation. Yet, because they are adapt-

able, playful, nonjudgmental, and have the intention of having things work out well, they invent effective solutions.

## Intuition

Creativity is associated with an ability to be guided by subtle inner feelings. To cope well with new situations often depends on a sense that something is wrong. A tight stomach or an uneasy feeling may be the clue. These feelings can be set off by anything—a person's tone of voice, something not said, a group's quietness, anything at all that doesn't fit.

In general, women are better at using intuition than men because most women are raised practicing it. Men who practice intuition can develop the same ability.

## Empathy

The people who survive best in a variety of situations have empathy for others. They can quickly read the emotional states, attitudes, and perceptions of others. They can step outside of their own feelings and views to take into account the feelings and perceptions of others, even though disliked. Effective negotiators know that the way to get a win/win solution is to start by looking at the situation from the other person's point of view.

The empathy of survivors is not that of a weak, easily hurt bleeding heart. It is the kind of empathy Abraham Lincoln used during his years as a defense attorney. He was very successful because he would begin his opening statements to the jury presenting a better case against his client than the opposing attorney was prepared to do!

Empathy includes understanding people who live and think in disliked ways. The attitude of the empathy described here is "whether I enjoy you or dislike you, I am going to understand you as well as you understand yourself—and maybe better."

## Defending One's Self

Sensitivity to others must be protected by toughness, however. This world has more dangers than just physical ones. Unique ac-

complishments draw criticism as well as praise. The paradoxical person will be criticized for being unpredictable and for having supposedly undesirable qualities. There is no way to avoid it. It is impossible to exist on this planet without being criticized by someone. Emotional survival requires healthy self-esteem and an ability to defend yourself against emotional attacks.

The paradox is that the better you become at shrugging off attacks or threats, the less others will try to attack. Ask anyone who has achieved black belt status in the martial arts. They find that after spending years training to handle attackers, no one picks a fight with them!

## Learning From Experience

The survivor personality can be learned but not taught. It develops out of self-managed learning from experience. You manage your learning by asking questions and finding your own answers. To react to life as a school means to ask questions such as:

How did they do that? Why didn't this work? Why did I do that? I wonder why people do such things? What if...?

Sometimes your best lessons are learned from bad experiences. Here are the steps to follow:

1. Ask "What happened?"
2. Replay the incident as an observer.
3. Describe what happened. Put it into words.
4. Ask "What can I learn from this? What is the lesson here?"
5. Ask "Next time, what will I do differently?"
6. The next time a person says that to me, what will I say?
7. Imagine yourself handling the situation well the next time.
8. See and feel yourself getting the outcome you desire.
9. Rehearse the effective response.

This procedure for self-managed learning will have you looking forward to the next incident with a positive anticipation. A person who dwells on the past experience with anger and distress anticipates the next incident with dread and does not expect a good outcome.

## Serendipity

Horace Walpole coined the word *serendipity*. He used it to describe times when a person has the *wisdom* to see that an *accident* or unfortunate development is actually a stroke of *good fortune*. The talent for serendipity develops from questions such as "Why is it good that this happened?" "What do I have to do to make things turn out well?"

If you can look back on a rough situation you went through, and appreciate that it was also good for you, then you know what serendipity is all about. It is the ability to find something good in bad experiences and the ability to convert misfortune into good luck.

## What Would You Do?

People develop survivor personalities by using the traits, qualities, and habits described here in their daily lives. Here's a little test. Imagine that you are about 21 years old and have just been married. For your honeymoon you have rented a romantic old wooden cabin for a week in the hills in southern California.

At dawn the first morning a woodpecker lands on the roof and starts hammering away at the shingles. The second morning the noisy bird is back again at dawn and starts its loud, jackhammer search for insects. Every morning at dawn you are awakened by the noisy woodpecker.

What would you do? Demand that the manager get rid of the bird? Ask for a shotgun? Move to another cabin? What?

This is a true story. The honeymooners were a playful, good natured young couple. He worked as an illustrator with Walt Disney studios. You may have heard of them. They are Gracy and Walter Lanz. They created the cartoon character Woody the Woodpecker on their honeymoon as their response to the pesky woodpecker that woke them up every morning.

When interviewed on their wedding anniversary years later, they said that the woodpecker landing on the cabin roof during their honeymoon "was the best thing that ever happened to us."

## Life is the Best School

Abraham Maslow is quoted as saying that no one achieves full self-actualization until the age of sixty. He saw that people who constantly learn from experience get better decade after decade.

In many ways the best learning comes from the school of life. Throughout this book, whenever we addressed a difficult situation, our approach has been to show you that no matter what happens, you have the inborn ability to handle the difficulty in a way that makes you a stronger, more capable person.

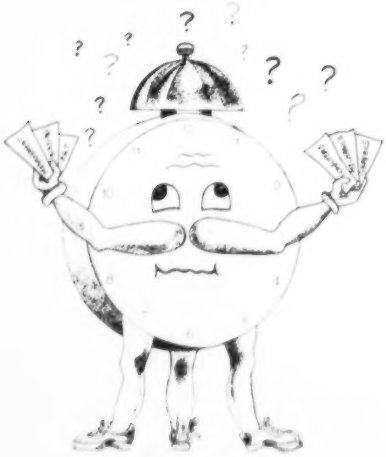
## Action Review: Indicators of A Survivor Personality

- ❒ Do I feel comfortable being paradoxical?
- ❒ Is my self-esteem strong enough to handle criticisms and failures?
- ❒ Am I known to be a playful, curious person?
- ❒ Am I good at making things work well?
- ❒ Can I count on my hunches and intuition?
- ❒ Do I have good empathy skills?
- ❒ Do I defend myself effectively when attacked?
- ❒ Do I learn good lessons from daily experiences?
- ❒ Am I able to turn misfortune into good luck?
- ❒ Have I discovered that one of the worst experiences in my life was also one of the best things that ever happened?

## Study Buddy Activity

Talk with each other about your reaction to learning it is desirable to have paradoxical personality traits. Were you raised to be one way but not the opposite? Trained to be a "good" child?

Tell each other about one of the worst experiences of your life and what you learned or gained from it. Take your time. Let each person finish before anyone else starts their story.



*Appendix*

# Career Choice, Career Change

Do you know what the word *vocation* means? It means to find a life's work that *calls* to you. Finding a career that is right for you can take time. Some people have three or four careers during their lives. Until you find a career that calls to you, you may feel dissatisfied, uncertain, and lost. These are common feelings. Many people have them.

Would you like to discover work that satisfies you? Brings excitement? Challenges your potential? Lets you start each day with happy expectations? Allows the lifestyle you desire? Fine. Career counselors have many ways to help you discover an exciting new career path.

To begin your vocational discovery process you need to look at your personal values and interests. You need to clarify what you want from life and look at the job market. You need to find a match between what you enjoy doing and what needs doing.

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## Values Change

Adult students know they have many skills such as maintaining a home, working on an assembly line or in a restaurant, and changing the oil in a car. But what is it that you choose to spend your life energies on for the next 10 to 20 years? To start to answer this question, you must examine what you value in life. The older you get, the more your career decisions will be based on your values.

Some of the values people bring to work are:

- Helping people or making the world a better place.
- Being the boss, having power, influence over others.
- Having security, work well understood, steady paycheck.
- Having excitement, challenge, and pressure.
- Making money enough to live "the good life."
- Being allowed to choose own time, work, standards.
- Bringing beauty, variety, new ideas into the world.

Other satisfactions in your work other than money include:

- Working with things or information rather than people.
- Being in a nice place, wearing good clothes.
- Having physical activity and working out-of-doors.
- Working as a member of a friendly team.
- Performing a service of value to others.

Now take a moment to reflect on jobs you have had in the past. What were the qualities you really liked or valued? What were the things you could do without? Remember, there is no such thing as a perfect job.

Your values change a great deal with various life cycles and changes of circumstances. A man of 50, who has been bumped from the middle management of the company to which he has devoted 25 years, will feel differently than he did starting a career. It may be that loyalty to the company is now less important than being loyal to one's profession. For a woman who loses her partner and her financial security at the same time, security may be her highest value as she struggles to survive.

## Transferable Skills

Every person has many skills. You may be good at communication, juggling figures, fixing things with your hands, or being sensitive to people's needs. First identify what skills you have. Let your friends help. Then decide which skills you would like to use or emphasize in your next career.

Some skills that employers value the most are:

| | |
|---|---|
| Budget management | Supervising |
| Handling deadline pressure | Interviewing |
| Negotiating/arbitrating | Communicating |
| Getting along with people | Public relations |
| Information gathering | Instructing |

More important than knowing what the working world wants is knowing what you want. You can see that the journey to a new career starts inward when you question, "What do I value in life? What have I got to offer? Which skills do I choose to use in my next career?" No one can really answer these questions for you, but various assessing methods can help sift and clarify values, skills, and interests.

## Some Vocational Assessment Instruments

The following are available at most college testing departments.

### Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory (SCII)

An occupational interest inventory comparing students' answering patterns with those of people satisfactorily employed in various occupations. Questions deal with likes/dislikes; norms based on a population of four-year degree, professional employees. Probably more suited to students with interest in professional fields requiring at least a four-year degree.

### Career Assessment Inventory (CAI)

Similar in format to the Strong-Campbell. Normed on general population. Usually more suitable for students in vocational education.

**Self-Directed Search (SDS)**

A self-evaluating, less formal inventory written by John Holland. Categories cover areas of interest and competencies.

**Discover**

A complete, computerized, career planning system. The nine step sequence covers all aspects of cereer planning with an emphasis on a graphic/visual approach.

**Minnesota Importance Questionnaire (MIQ)**

A vocational inventory in which test takers are asked to rank job statements, thus identifying features important in their ideal job. Assists in prioritizing values and predicting job satisfaction.

**California Occupational Preference System (COPS)**

A self-administered and self-scored inventory, comparing relative strength of interest in many different occupations. Provides print-out of college majors. Available for different reading levels.

**Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, Edwards Personal Preference Schedule, Personality Research Form (PRF)**

These are personality profiles, indicating personality types. They help to understand how students perceive information and life.

**Personality Mosaic**

Inventory from which a student can obtain a Holland Code (as in Strong-Campbell, etc.) and a "data/people/things" rating.

**Please Understand Me**
(Jefferson Software)

Results are similar to the Myers-Briggs Personality Profile. Can be completed on a computer, or with pencil and paper. Used primarily as self-awareness tool.

**Study Skills: Self-Exploration in Series 3**
(Educational Media Corp.)

Identifies a student's learning style. Helps maximize study efforts.

**System of Interactive Guidance and Instructions (SIGI)**

Computerized occupational assessment and exploration system in nine steps. Usually first section can be completed in approximately two hours. This system has in-depth research potential including values clarification and résumé help.

**Résumé Writer II**
(Career Development Software, Inc.)

A step by step approach for creating a résumé. IBM compatable.

## What Are Your Fun Interests?

People's values change, but certain traits of personality stay the same. What do you know about your own nature?

Do you like to be left alone while you work with your hands or at something mentally challenging? Are you spurred on when you have a chance to lead others?

Do you like work where you can enjoy being around people and feel more alive when you work as a team member? What do you do in your spare time that is fun? In the spaces following write down what you know about yourself:

## A Self-Assessment

My top work values:

_____

_____

_____

My top job satisfiers (other than money):

_____

_____

_____

The transferable skills I want to use on my next job:

_____

_____

_____

My fun interests are:

_____

_____

_____

Occupations that might be a good match for me are:

_____

_____

_____

Now that you have looked at who you are and what you want, it is time to examine possible careers. It is useful to have three or four careers in mind as a matter of comparison. If you do not know of someone who has that career, ask job placement, counseling/career department or an instructor in that field to help you identify a resource person for an information interview.

The three most important rules for getting job information are:

1. *Talk* to people!
2. Talk to *people*!!
3. *Talk to people*!!!

## How to Get First-Hand Career Information

Job market information changes so rapidly that by the time it gets into books, it is often two years old and out of date. Magazines and computerized information systems have more current data about careers. For the most up-to-date word on occupations, there is no better way than to talk to people. A general feel for the wide market flow can be obtained in casual contacts with people and from conducting self-arranged information visits.

### Guidelines for Information Interviewing

- Arrange to visit a work place where people are doing the kinds of jobs that you have an interest in.
- Never ask for a job.
- You can go by yourself or with a small group.
- Wear comfortable shoes; you may be given a tour.

- Dress to create a professional appearance: clean, well-groomed, classic.
- Do not walk around or snoop where you are not wanted.
- Come prepared to take notes; be a good reporter; get the facts.
- Stay within your timelines.
- Ask only those questions that are of most importance to you.
- Make sure you know the name and title of the person you are talking with.
- Be a good listener.
- Take a real interest in the person, the field, and the organization.
- Volunteer information about your interests, exeprience, and goals.
- Ask if you can stay in contact with the person.
- Always get referrals of other people to whom you may talk.
- *Always* send a thank you note.

**Questions to Ask Regarding the Career**

- What are the training/degree requirements for this line of work?
- What is the best way to enter this field to ensure advancement?
- Which entry-level jobs are best for learning as much as possible?
- Which entry-level jobs are dead ends?
- What is the starting salary for a person in this field?
- Are there extra social/professional obligations that go with this work (unions, professional organization meetings, etc.)?
- What sort of changes are happening in this occupation that will affect future opportunities?
- Who are some people I should talk with to learn more about this career?
- Are there any special considerations for women/men starting in this field?
- Do you need special tools or equipment in this field?
- Are there any occupational hazards in this line of work?

## Career Opportunities

You have started the journey inward, looking at what is true for you. You have examined values, satisfiers, skills interests and career options. Now it is time to explore the day-to-day work world and eventually hitch your wagon to the future.

Sources of information about career opportunities, national and local, include:

Newspapers
Weekly news magazines: *U.S. News & World Report, Business Week*
Monthly magazines: *Fortune, Money*
*Vocational Biographies, Inc.* contains personal biographies of careers from skilled labor to highest profesisonal level. Particularly useful because of data on newest careers.
Business section of newspapers
In-house papers and newletters for employees
Chamber of commerce publications
Local magazines
Professional and trade journals
Civil service offices
*Occupational Outlook Handbook* and *CIS Occupational Information* give predictions of the labor market.

☆ Note: The classified section of a newspaper lists *less than 20%* of the available jobs. Use it to survey the job market for shortages of employees in certain fields, not for a comprehensive job information.

## Pay Attention to Future Trends

No crystal-ball gazer can guarantee job security in the decades ahead. Changes in population, energy sources, technology, environment, and social values lead to declines in some occupations, increases in other occupations, and the birth of new occupations.

We no longer have a local/national economy. Now it is a global/outer space economy that will require cooperation and communication like never before.



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The present shift from a manufacturing society to an information society will be more drastic than our shift from horse and buggy to the assembly line. Our increasing population will see people living in parts of the world presently considered uninhabitable. The lengthening life span will lead to major social changes.

No matter how carefully we study the trends of the future, there will be some occurrences, inventions, and surprises that are totally unpredictable, will affect your life profoundly, and will take a great deal of flexibility and adaptability on your part. Nourishing that part of you that looks on change as exciting and rewarding will pay big dividends. Be a survivor! The average person will change careers three to five times.

The world's population will double in 35 years. Energy consumed in the last 100 years equals one-half of all the energy consumed in the last 2,000 years. Computer related jobs will grow by 30,000 every year. There will be 17,000 more engineering positions than people to fill them. Medical workers will see big increases in the years ahead and two-thirds of American workers will be employed in services.

Retraining and educational benefits will become as important to employees as wages. More women will combine career and home interests, resulting in increased need for child-care services. On-site child care will be a top priority benefit. Seventeen percent of all workers will be in the health or education field, and there will be jobs in the health, energy, and information industries that do not yet exist. By the year 2000 only 8% of the jobs will be in manufacturing; 90% will be in services.

The new business person, with good ideas and the energy to implement them, will have great opportunity in the future. Trade with Europe, Africa, the Pacific Rim, and Spanish-speaking countries will increase.

No crystal ball can guarantee a path to job security. We can, however, make ourselves highly valued employees by keeping ready for change by continued education. American businesses spend billions of dollars to educate and train their employees. Seeking new opportunities to learn, getting excited over new ideas, and welcoming a chance for more training will be among

the most valued traits of an employee. The thing we know for sure about the future and careers is it will bring change and challenge.

## For Further Information

For further information and materials on obtaining career information and the information interview, see:

*Bernard Haldane Associates Job & Career Building* by Richard Germann
*Coming Alive From Nine To Five* by Betty Michelozzi
*The Complete Job Search Handbook* by Howard Figler
*Go Hire Yourself an Employer* by Richard Irish
*Job Hunting* by Charlie Mitchell and Lauren Collins
*Megatrends 2000* by John Naisbitt and Patricia Aburdene
*Mid-Career Crisis* by Jean Russell Nave and Louise M. Nelson
*Want a New, Better, Fantastic Job?* by Pam Gross and Peter Paskill
*What Color Is Your Parachute?* by Richard Bolles
*Who's Hiring Who* by Richard Lathrop
*Zapp! The Lightening of Empowerment* by William Bynum, Ph.D.

## Blazing New Trails

As you look for a new career, remember that you are a pioneer. A few years ago people did not change careers. They stayed in the same jobs all their lives, even when they felt dissatisfied and bored.

You are on an exciting new adventure. The lack of clear direction about what to do is an opportunity, not a stumbling block. Searching for a second or third career, starting a first career after raising a family, is a new development for working people.

You are cutting a new path into new territory. Help and resources are available, but finding a satisfying vocation is up to you. So dream about a future that appeals to you and go for it!

# SOURCES AND SUGGESTED READING

**Chapter 1**

p. 4 Sher, Barbara, and Annie Gottlieb. *Teamworks!* New York: Warner Books, 1991. Contains valuable guidelines for forming and running a support group.

**Chapter 2**

p. 8 Bob DePrato quote from *Your Hidden Credentials*, by Peter Smith. Washington, DC: Acropolis Books, 1986, p. 67. An encouraging book for adult students.

p. 9 Eva Corazon Fernando-Lumba quote from the *Oregonian*, May 30, 1991.

p. 11 A good book on sources of money for adult students is *Paying for Your Education: A Guide for Adult Learners*. Copies may be purchased from College Board Publication Orders, P.O. Box 2815, Princeton, NJ 08541.

**Chapter 3**

p. 21 Ekstrom, Ruth B.; Abigail M. Harris; and Marlaine E. Lockheed. *How to Get College Credit for What You Have Learned as a Homemaker and Volunteer*. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.

p. 22 Ronald E. Lemay story in *The Christian Science Monitor*, April 24, 1987. Center section.

p. 24 Foundation Center. *Grants for Minorities*. New York: Foundation Center, 1990.

p. 24 Carol Sasaki, assisted by many volunteers, publishes *The HOME Door Newsletter*. It has up-to-date information about ways to finance a college education. For a sample copy send $1 to: HOME, P.O. Box 1544, Dublin, OH 43017. To read more about Carol Sasaki, see "From Welfare to Work Force" by Chris Phillips in *Family Circle*, Oct. 11, 1988.

p. 25 Article about Gerald Winterlin, "We're Not Bums," appeared in *Parade Magazine*, May 13, 1991, p. 8.

p. 26 U. S. Department of Education. *The Student Guide*, 1991.

p. 26 Hechinger, Grace. "Will Your Company Pay for Your Classes?" *Glamour Magazine*, Feb. 1987.

**Chapter 5**

p. 38 Mendelsohn, Pam. *Happier by Degrees*. New York: Dutton, 1980. A practical book for women in college who have families. Includes case histories of women who went back to school. Covers such topics as: how student mothers become better mothers; how husbands and children react and think; juggling roles; being a single parent; and advice from husbands of reentry students to other husbands.

p. 38 Bateson, Mary Catherine. *Composing a Life*. New York: Penguin Books, 1990. This book is about "Life as a work in progress—the improvisations of five extraordinary women." Inspriational.

**Chapter 6**

p. 49 Eurich, Neil. *Corporate Classrooms: The Learning Business*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985.

p. 49 Conroy, Mary. "Co-operative Education: Learn-and-Earn College Programs." *Better Homes & Gardens*, May 1987.

p. 50 Eliason, Carol. "Co-op Can Make a Difference to Fledgling Entrepreneurs." *Workplace Education*, Sept.-Oct. 1984.

**Chapter 7**

p. 56 Edna Mae Pitman quote from the *Oregonian*, Jan. 1989.

**Chapter 8**

p. 68 Lakein, Alan. *How to Get Control of Your Time and Your Life*. New York: New American Library, 1973. A classic in the field. Lakein shows how to establish priorities for yourself, choose activities that are of highest value to you, and minimize the amount of time you put into low payoff activities. If your school has an audiovisual library, it may have a copy of the

film based on this book. You can arrange to preview the film. Take a few friends.

**Chapter 9**

p. 72 Slavin, Robert; N. Madden; N. Karweit; L. Dolan; B. Wasik; A. Shaw; K. Mainzer; and B. Harb. "Never Streaming: Prevention and Early Interventionas Alternative to Special Education." *Journal of Learning Disabilities*. June/July 1991, pp. 373-378.

p. 72 Shulman, Steven. "Facing the Invisable Handicap." *Psychology Today*, Feb. 1986.

**Chapter 10**

p. 93 McKeachie, Wilbert J.; Donald Pollie; and Joseph Speisman. "Relieving Anxiety in Classroom Examination." *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*. Vol. 50, No. 1, Jan. 1955, pp. 93-98.

**Chapter 11**

p. 102 Strunk, William, Jr., and E. B. White. *The Elements of Style*. New York: Macmillan, 1972. This book can be valuable to anyone wanting to improve the quality and clarity of written communications. It shows how to use good grammar, punctuate correctly, and write clearly. Note: There is now a computer software program available to help check spelling and grammar.

**Chapter 12**

p. 108 Chapman, Elwood N. *Your Attitude Is Showing*. Chicago: Science Research Associates, Inc., an IBM company, 1987.

p. 111 Keirsey, David, and Marilyn Bates. *Please Understand Me*. Del Mar: Prometheus Nemesis Book Co., 1984.

p. 111 Brown, Virginia, and David DeCoster. "The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator as a Developmental Measure: Implications for Student Learners in Higher Education." *Journal of College Student Development*, July 1991.

p. 115 Hays, Pamela and R. Ellis. *Communication Activities for Personal Life Strategies*. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, 1989.

**Chapter 15**

p. 134 Flach, Frederic. *Resilience: Discovering A New Strength at Times of Stress*. New York: Fawcett Columbine, 1988.

p. 138 See *Developing a 21st Century Mind* by Marsha Sinitar. New York: Villard Books, 1991. A good book on how to be creatively adaptive.

p. 138 Rowan, Roy. *The Intuitive Manager*. Boston, Toronto: Little, Brown, 1986.

p. 139 An excellent, practical book on how to develop empathy for opponents is *Getting Past No* by William Ury. New York: Bantam Books, 1991.

p. 140 Merriam, Sharon B. *Learning in Adulthood*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991.

p. 141 For information about people who survive what they were told were terminal illnesses, read *Love, Medicine, and Miracles* by Bernie Siegel. New York: Harper and Row, 1986. Chapter 8 includes a summary of Al Siebert's survivor personality research findings and self-healing.

**Appendix**

p. 136 Levinson, P.J. *The Seasons of A Man's Life*. New York: Knopf, 1978.

p. 136 Porcino, Jane. *Growing Older, Getting Better: A Handbook for Women in the Second Half of Life*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1983.

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| 8-9 | | | | | | | |
| 9-10 | | | | | | | |
| 10-11 | | | | | | | |
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AL SIEBERT received his M.A. and Ph.D. in psychology from the University of Michigan. He has more than twenty years of teaching experience in adult education. His books include *Student Success: How to Succeed in College and Still Have Time for Your Friends.*

BERNADINE GILPIN started college at thirty-five, and with five children. She has a B.S. in education and an M.S. in counseling, and has worked for more than fifteen years as an instructor, administrator, and counselor. She has created and teaches a college survival and success class.

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